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Waldo E. Forbes

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1400 Turks overcame Mongols

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# DE QUINCEY'S

# REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

EDITED

WITH NOTES AND AN INTRODUCTION

BY

CHARLES SEARS BALDWIN, PH.D.

INSTRUCTOR IN RHETORIC IN YALE UNIVERSITY

NEW YORK

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# PREFACE

THE "Revolt of the Tartars" is essentially like "The English Mail Coach." Both start from fact, both move in dreamland. In order to make this plain, De Quincey's choice and use of material are carefully displayed. To obtrude this historical matter would have been prejudicial to more strictly literary interest; to omit it, prejudicial to any just estimate of the work and the author. The appendices, therefore, show, so far as was proper within the scope of this volume, the basis of those judgments in the introduction and the notes which do not accord with common fame. Erudition is sometimes proclaimed among De Quincey's merits. A careful examination of this piece, in its revelation of certain habits, impairs this claim. If many other pieces of De Quincey's now reckoned as historical were subjected to the same scrutiny, perhaps there would be less said of his erudition, and so of his versatility.

But why should criticism of literature be concerned with erudition, or, for that matter, with versatility? If a man does well his kind of writing, that is enough. The student of this volume is not asked to admire either a footnote erudition or a versatility that consists in the journalist's variety of topics. The critical apparatus seeks to concentrate his attention upon De Quincey's high imagination and the range and finish of his expression.

Mere information necessarily occupies a great deal of space when the subject is so far out of the common as the migration of the Torguts. But wherever the equipment

of the average school could be trusted, the student has been directed, not informed. In criticism, too, the editor has tried to direct and stimulate rather than to dogmatize. Where everything is supplied ready-made, even to convenient labels of characterization, the appeal is only to memory. No student is less amenable to education than he who knows his English literature thoroughly at second hand.

The text here printed is that of Hogg's collective edition (Edinburgh, 1853–1860), which was prepared by the author. The text of the new Edinburgh collective edition (Adam and Charles Black), edited by Professor Masson, has been carefully collated and some of the emendations in punctuation adopted. The text of the original Blackwood article (1837) differs here and there in phrase, nowhere in substance. All notes except De Quincey's are relegated to the end of the book. The arrangement of the critical apparatus being throughout such as to facilitate questioning, the usual specimen examination papers seemed unnecessary.

The editor returns thanks for assistance to Dr. Nelson Glenn McCrea of Columbia University, and to Mr. Frederick Wells Williams of Yale University; for the loan of Bergmann's book, to the library of Harvard University.

C. S. B.

YALE UNIVERSITY, *August*, 1896.

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# INTRODUCTION

## I. Biographical Sketch of De Quincey.

The long life of the "English Opium-Eater" (1785–1859) almost covered the history of our country from the Revolution to the Civil War. But he is to be thought of as belonging to the literary movement of the early part of the century, to the time of his boyish idol, Wordsworth, rather than to the time of his later and younger friend Carlyle; to the time of Irving rather than to the time of Emerson. His father was a Manchester merchant of literary tastes, who died early, leaving to his wife and six surviving children an income of about eight thousand dollars a year. The boy Thomas, brought up among girls and women, was thoughtful and imaginative. "From my birth," he says, "I was made an intellectual creature, and intellectual in the highest sense my pursuits and pleasures have been even from my schoolboy days."[1] Add that he was finely sensitive, and you will see that such a boy, were he English or French or American, would make his own world of dreams and live in that. He missed the education of cricket and football. No Eton or Rugby forced him to be an English boy. When he was only seven, indeed, his big brother William came home from school and put him through a course of daily brawls with factory boys. At length William was able to bestow this faint praise: "You're honest; you're willing, though lazy; you would pull, if you had the strength of a flea; and, though a

[1] *Confessions.*

monstrous coward, you don't run away."[1] But that is the only physical discipline recorded in a life of intellectual experiences.

"I was sent to various schools, great and small; and was very early distinguished for my classical attainments, especially for my knowledge of Greek. At thirteen I wrote Greek with ease; and at fifteen my command of that language was so great that I not only composed Greek verses in lyric metres, but could converse in Greek fluently, and without embarrassment—an accomplishment which I have not since met with in any scholar of my times, and which, in my case, was owing to the practice of daily reading off the newspapers into the best Greek I could furnish *extempore;* for the necessity of ransacking my memory and invention for all sorts and combinations of periphrastic expressions, as equivalents for modern ideas, images, relations of things, etc., gave me a compass of diction which would never have been called out by a dull translation of moral essays, etc. 'That boy,' said one of my masters, pointing the attention of a stranger to me, 'that boy could harangue an Athenian mob better than you or I could address an English one.' He who honoured me with this eulogy was a scholar, 'and a ripe and good one;' and, of all my tutors, was the only one whom I loved or reverenced. Unfortunately for me (and, as I afterwards learned, to this worthy man's great indignation), I was transferred to the care, first of a blockhead, who was in a perpetual panic lest I should expose his ignorance: and finally, to that of a respectable scholar, at the head of a great school on an ancient foundation."[2]

Try to pierce through the egotism of the record, which comes, not from vulgar vanity, but from a solitary life, to the high desires and attainments of this precocious boy. True, in his fifteenth year, visiting at Laxton, the country-seat of a family friend, Lady Carbery, he is found acting as literary adviser to the household; but to gain the affection and admiration of this versatile woman, till she was like a sister to him, he must have been more than a prig. The same endearing quality appears in his visit to Ireland

[1] *Autobiographic Sketches*, i. 39. [2] *Confessions.*

with a boy of his own age, Lord Westport, and in the pleasure Lord Westport's father, Lord Altamont, found in talking with the brilliant boy. This middle-aged Irish peer even kept up for some time a correspondence with De Quincey. More than Greek and Latin, then, the boy had learned at fifteen. Many years afterward he could write on the Irish rebellions from the first-hand knowledge he had picked up then in Ireland. He had an open mind. One thing more. He had already discovered Wordsworth's "We are Seven" at a time when the very few people who had heard of Wordsworth, heard only to laugh. He had an independent mind.

The "great school" mentioned above was the Manchester Grammar School, which had been chosen by his guardians because it was entitled to certain scholarships at Oxford. De Quincey despised the master and hated the school. He declared that his health was being undermined for lack of exercise, that he was quite prepared to go up to Oxford. The guardians, with their eyes on the scholarship, rejected all appeals for removal. He asked Lady Carbery to lend him five guineas to help out the two he had left. She sent him ten. Then De Quincey ran away.

"I waited until I saw the trunk placed on a wheelbarrow, and on its road to the carrier's; then, 'with Providence my guide,' I set off on foot, carrying a small parcel, with some articles of dress, under my arm; a favourite English poet in one pocket, and a small 12mo volume, containing about nine plays of Euripides, in the other." [1]

When De Quincey ran away at seventeen, he was in thought a man. In practical experience he was neither then nor ever afterward more than a child. But would Wordsworth treat him as a man or as a runaway schoolboy? Sorrowfully inclining to the latter view, he gave

[1] *Confessions.*

up his plan of going straight to the Lakes, and went wandering in Wales. No one should read the account of these years of transition anywhere else than in De Quincey's own "Confessions." The mere facts are comparatively insignificant. He slept much out of doors; he wrote letters for bed or food; he studied German with a chance acquaintance; he finally went up to London in the hope of raising money on his prospects. In London he applied to many Jewish money-lenders in vain. His money gone, he walked the streets, sleeping in one of the empty rooms of a house where a pettifogging lawyer carried on some obscure and doubtful business. Hunger and exposure undermined his constitution and gave him a chronic malady of the stomach. None too soon came the reconciliation with the guardians from whom he had been hiding. It was arranged that he should live at the university on £100 a year.

Nothing in the whole life of De Quincey makes less impression upon his readers, or seems to have made less impression upon himself, than Oxford. He entered Worcester College, December 17, 1803, and his name remained on the books till 1810; but he might as well have been reading in any other quiet place. He studied ancient philosophy, German literature, and metaphysics. He dipped into Hebrew with a German named Schwartzburg; he was known to a few as brilliant in conversation. In 1808 he left without a degree; and the explanations of this, both his own and those advanced by his friends and biographers, tend only to strengthen the impression that De Quincey was a *dilettante* rather than a scholar. This period appears among his imaginative reminiscences only in "The English Mail Coach." He dreams, not of the old colleges, the gardens, the river, Magdalen tower—anything that has passed into the heart of any other man of letters —but of the coach that took him to London, of the "glory

of motion," the "under-sense of indefinite danger," "the conscious presence of a central intellect in the midst of vast distances." Nothing could better show his aloofness.

Before definitely leaving Oxford, De Quincey had corresponded at some length with Wordsworth, and had visited Coleridge and Southey. While he was lingering undecided in London, reading a little law, meeting men of letters, he began the systematic use of opium. One of his chief pleasures was to take opium before going to the opera.

"A chorus, etc., of elaborate harmony displayed before me, as in a piece of arras work, the whole of my past life—not as if recalled by an act of memory, but as if present and incarnated in the music; no longer painful to dwell upon, but the detail of its incidents removed, or blended in some hazy abstraction, and its passions exalted, spiritualized, and sublimed. All this was to be had for five shillings. And over and above the music of the stage and the orchestra, I had all around me, in the intervals of the performance, the music of the Italian language talked by Italian women—for the gallery was usually crowded with Italians; and I listened with a pleasure such as that with which Weld the traveller lay and listened, in Canada, to the sweet laughter of Indian women; for the less you understand of a language, the more sensible you are to the melody or harshness of its sounds." [1]

Opium was used also to heighten the pleasure of mingling with the London crowd on Saturday night.

"For the sake, therefore, of witnessing upon as large a scale as possible a spectacle with which my sympathy was so entire, I used often on Saturday nights, after I had taken opium, to wander forth, without much regarding the direction or the distance, to all the markets and other parts of London to which the poor resort of a Saturday night for laying out their wages. Many a family party, consisting of a man, his wife, and sometimes one or two of his children, have I listened to, as they stood consulting on their ways and means, or the strength of their exchequer, or the price of household articles." [2]

[1] *Confessions.* [2] *Ibid.*

His attitude of mind at this time, and, to some extent, throughout his life, appears significantly in the following:

"I, whose disease it was to meditate too much, and to observe too little, and who, upon my first entrance at college, was nearly falling into a deep melancholy, from brooding too much on the sufferings which I had witnessed in London, was sufficiently aware of the tendencies of my own thoughts to do all I could to counteract them. I was, indeed, like a person who, according to the old legend, had entered the cave of Trophonius; and the remedies I sought were to force myself into society, and to keep my understanding in continual activity upon matters of science. But for these remedies I should certainly have become hypochondriacally melancholy. In after years, however, when my cheerfulness was more fully re-established, I yielded to my natural inclination for a solitary life. And, at that time, I often fell into these reveries upon taking opium: and more than once it has happened to me, on a summer night, when I have been at an open window, in a room from which I could overlook the sea at a mile below me, and could command a view of the great town of L——, at about the same distance, that I have sat from sunset to sunrise, motionless, and without wishing to move."[1]

From this unsettled life De Quincey roused himself to go where he had been strongly drawn since boyhood—to the Westmoreland Lakes and the society of those poets who have since been grouped as the Lake School. Coleridge, Southey, and, foremost of all, Wordsworth, were seeking to establish in England a kind of poetry essentially different from the poetry of the eighteenth century. The difference appears most strikingly in two characteristics. The eighteenth century preferred the interests of men and women in the city, and held to a somewhat formal and conventional expression. Wordsworth and his followers preached and practised a "return to nature," that is, a return to the simpler interests of country people, to the love of scenery apart from men and women, and to a more direct and natural expression. Again, the eighteenth

[1] *Confessions.*

century discouraged imagination, whereas imagination was made by these reformers almost the touchstone of true poetry. Though all the great poets of the time caught the spirit of this change, the critics and the public were so slow in following them that for some years the Lake School was a butt of ridicule. It was with the ardour of a disciple, then, that De Quincey, at the age of twenty-four, went to be near his heroes of literature. After living for some time with the Wordsworths at Grasmere, he took a lease of their cottage when they removed to a larger one, filled it with books, and spent about ten years in reading, playing with the Wordsworth children, walking and talking to his heart's content with the poets themselves. He thus describes the Vale of Grasmere:

"Once I absolutely went forwards from Coniston to the very gorge of Hammerscar, from which the whole Vale of Grasmere suddenly breaks upon the view in a style of almost theatrical surprise, with its lovely valley stretching before the eye in the distance, the lake lying immediately below, with its solemn, ark-like island of four and a half acres in size seemingly floating on its surface, and its exquisite outline on the opposite shore, revealing all its little bays and wild sylvan margin, feathered to the edge with wild flowers and ferns. In one quarter, a little wood stretching for about half a mile towards the outlet of the lake; more directly in opposition to the spectator, a few green fields; and beyond them, just two bowshots from the water, a little white cottage gleaming from the midst of trees, with a vast and seemingly never-ending series of ascents rising above it to the height of more than three thousand feet."[1]

The interior of the cottage is described in the "Confessions":

"Paint me, then, a room seventeen feet by twelve, and not more than seven and a half feet high. This, reader, is somewhat ambitiously styled in my family the drawing-room; but being contrived 'a double debt to pay,' it is also, and more justly, termed the library,

[1] *Autobiographic Sketches*, ii., 234.

for it happens that books are the only article of property in which I am richer than my neighbours. Of these I have about five thousand, collected gradually since my eighteenth year. Therefore, painter, put as many as you can into this room. Make it populous with books; and, furthermore, paint me a good fire; and furniture plain and modest, befitting the unpretending cottage of a scholar. And near the fire paint me a tea-table; and (as it is clear that no creature can come to see one such a stormy night) place only two cups and saucers on the tea-tray; and if you know how to paint such a thing symbolically, or otherwise, paint me an eternal tea-pot—eternal *à parte ante*, and *à parte post*—for I usually drink tea from eight o'clock at night to four o'clock in the morning. . . . The next article brought forward should naturally be myself—a picture of the Opium-eater, with his 'little golden receptacle of the pernicious drug' lying beside him on the table. . . . No; you may as well paint the real receptacle, which was not of gold, but of glass, and as much like a wine-decanter as possible. Into this you may put a quart of ruby-colored laudanum; that, and a book of German Metaphysics placed by its side, will sufficiently attest my being in the neighbourhood."

Literary leisure has rarely been more perfectly realized. To most people, indeed to his own family, he was a recluse; but to his few intimates he was the most delightful and profitable of companions. Professor Wilson, who was twice De Quincey's size, and differed correspondingly in tastes, loved him dearly. The giant and the dwarf used to ramble interminably together, especially at night. These bachelor habits were hardly modified when, in 1816, De Quincey married Margaret Simpson, daughter of a neighbouring farmer. The marriage led him to curb his alarming consumption of opium, and combined with his habit of giving money away recklessly to force him into writing for a living. But after a few magazine articles, an important examination of Ricardo's political economy, followed by some original work on the same subject, and a futile attempt to edit a country paper, he relapsed into opium depression. It required a supreme effort of will

and the positive need of his wife and children finally to rouse him to systematic effort.

In 1821 De Quincey went to live in London as a regular writer for the new *London Magazine*, just established by the publishers Taylor and Hessey. At their table he met the London literary men of the day, especially Lamb and Hood; and in their magazine appeared the "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," which made him famous. Thus he was thirty-six when he came before the public. Indeed, the public might never have heard of him at all but for his need of money. From this time on anecdotes thicken about the little figure of the Opium-Eater. The two things that struck every one most were his wonderful conversation and the confusion in which he worked. Here is a note by Hood:

"When it was my frequent and agreeable duty to call on Mr. de Quincey . . . and I have found him at home, quite at home, in the midst of a German Ocean of literature in a storm, flooding all the floor, the tables, billows of books tossing, tumbling, surging open, on such occasions I have willingly listened by the hour whilst the philosopher, standing with his eyes fixed on one side of the room, seemed to be less speaking than reading from a 'handwriting on the wall.' Now and then he would diverge, for a Scotch mile or two, to the right or left, till I was tempted to inquire with Peregrine in *John Bull*, 'Do you never deviate?' but he always came safely back to the point where he had left, not lost the scent, and thence hunted his topic to the end."[1]

During his six or seven years' residence in London De Quincey's magazine-writing consisted mainly of essays on German and English literature and philosophy, and of translations from the German; but his range was always very wide. On political economy and history he wrote with assurance; on many other subjects with fluency. Gras-

[1] Hood, *Literary Reminiscences* (quoted by Hogg, *De Quincey and his Friends*, p. 239).

mere he visited rarely; and in 1828 a growing connection with *Blackwood's Magazine*, through his old friend Professor Wilson, led to the removal of the whole family to Edinburgh.

The Edinburgh period, though essentially one in literary activity, is divided into two parts by other considerations. During the first third the family lived together in town. In 1835 the elder son, a promising boy of eighteen, died of brain fever. In 1837, the year in which "The Revolt of the Tartars" was written, Mrs. De Quincey died. During the last two thirds, De Quincey had a cottage at Lasswade, not far from town, for the benefit of his children. His eldest daughter took charge of the household, and De Quincey, sometimes with them, sometimes in Edinburgh lodgings, sometimes in Glasgow, continued to study and write in seclusion till his death in 1859. He was now famous on both sides of the Atlantic. But though he continued to write without apparent flagging, and though his conversation continued to enchant the few who felt its spell, it is impossible not to see that his afflictions and the ultimate effects of opium had exaggerated his eccentricities into something grotesque and pitiable. He was a slovenly old man, unstrung, often confused. Brilliant he was still, but by flashes; gentle and courteous he could not help being, but he had forgotten how to dress, and he feared society. Through his last years there is a painful groping, a pathetic incompetence. But his power of reflection and expression survived all loss of practical efficiency. That died last. At the end, as at the beginning, he was "an intellectual creature."

"Intellectual creature," indeed, is a phrase that sums up what in the man's life is most memorable. He was purely a man of letters. Macaulay gave years to politics; Scott was anxious to found estates and a noble family; but all De Quincey cared for was first reading and thinking,

and secondarily talking and writing. His was an inner life. He never travelled farther than Ireland, and after his coming to Grasmere the externals of his life are insignificant. A life so self-centred was, of necessity, egotistical, not in vulgar vanity and selfishness, but in habitual spinning out of himself. But, what is more important, it was above all imaginative, moving in the world of art rather than in the world of fact, loving music, speculation, mystery.

It is only to look upon these traits from another side to add that he was abstracted, eccentric, incompetent in every-day matters. "I have just set my hair on fire," he remarks casually in a letter to his publisher. During the Edinburgh period his lodgings became, as he expressed it, "snowed up;" that is, the confusion of books and papers reached the point of crowding out the author. His remedy was very simple. He locked the door, took other lodgings, and began afresh. When one knows that this happened more than once, it is easier to believe the anecdotes current about this period.

"His clothes had generally a look of extreme age, and also of having been made for a person somewhat larger than himself. I believe the real cause of this was that he had got much thinner in those later years, whilst he wore, and did wear, I suppose till the end of his life, the clothes that had been made for him years before. I have sometimes seen appearances about him of a shirt and shirt-collar, but usually there were no indications of these articles of dress. When I came to visit him in his lodgings, I saw him in all stages of costume; sometimes he would come in to me from his bedroom to his parlour, as on this occasion, with shoes, but no stockings, and sometimes with stockings, but no shoes. When in bed, where I also saw him from time to time, he wore a large jacket—not exactly an under-jacket, but a jacket made in the form of a coat, of white flannel; something like a cricketer's coat in fact. In the street his appearance was equally singular. He walked with considerable rapidity (he said walking was the only athletic exercise in which he had ever excelled) and with an odd, one-sided, and yet straight-

forward motion, moving his legs only, and neither his arms, head, nor any other part of his body—like Wordsworth's cloud—

'Moving altogether, if he moved at all.'

His hat, which had the antediluvian aspect characteristic of the rest of his clothes, was generally stuck on the back of his head, and no one who ever met that antiquated figure, with that strangely dreamy and intellectual face, working its way rapidly, and with an oddly deferential air, through any of the streets of Edinburgh—a sight certainly by no means common, for he was very seldom to be seen in town—could ever forget it. He was very fond of walking, but generally his walks were merely into town to his publisher's office (Mr. Hogg's, then in Nicolson Street) and back again to Lasswade. Till he was nearly seventy he took this walk—one of twelve miles—without inconvenience."[1]

"Roofed by a huge wide-awake, which makes his tiny figure look like the stalk of some great fungus, with a lantern of more than common dimensions in his hand, away he goes down the wooded path, up the steep bank, along the brawling stream, and across the waterfall—and ever as he goes there comes from him a continued stream of talk, concerning the philosophy of Immanuel Kant, and other kindred matters. Surely if we two were seen by any human eyes, it must have been supposed that some gnome, or troll, or kelpie, was luring the listener to his doom. The worst of such affairs as this, was the consciousness that, when left, the old man would continue walking on until, weariness overcoming him, he would take his rest, wherever that happened, like some poor mendicant. He used to denounce, with his most fervid eloquence, that barbarous and brutal provision of the law of England, which rendered sleeping in the open air an act of vagrancy, and so punishable, if the sleeper could not give a satisfactory account of himself—a thing which Papaverius never could give under any circumstances."[2]

"For instance, those who knew him a little might call him a loose man in money matters; those who knew him closer laughed at the idea of coupling any notion of pecuniary or other like responsibility with his nature. You might as well attack the character of the nightingale, which may have nipped up your five-pound note and

[1] J. R. Findlay (*Hogg, ibid.*, p. 129).

[2] John Hill Burton, *The Book Hunter* (chapter entitled "Papaverius," quoted by Hogg, *ibid.*, p. 254).

torn it into shreds to serve as nest-building material. Only immediate, craving necessities could ever extract from him an acknowledgment of the common vulgar agencies by which men subsist in civilised society ; and only while the necessity lasted did the acknowledgment exist. Take just one example, which will render this clearer than any generalities. He arrives very late at a friend's door, and on gaining admission—a process in which he often endured impediments—he represents with his usual silver voice and measured rhetoric the absolute necessity of his being then and there invested with a sum of money in the current coin of the realm, the amount limited, from the nature of his necessities, which he very freely states, to seven shillings and sixpence. Discovering, or fancying he discovers, signs that his eloquence is likely to be unproductive, he is fortunately reminded that, should there be any difficulty in connection with security for the repayment of the loan, he is at that moment in possession of a document, which he is prepared to deposit with the lender—a document calculated, he cannot doubt, to remove a feeling of anxiety which the most prudent person could experience in the circumstances. After a rummage in his pockets, which develops miscellaneous and varied, but as yet by no means valuable possessions, he at last comes to the object of his search, a crumpled bit of paper, and spreads it out—a fifty-pound bank-note ! The friend, who knew him well, was of opinion that, had he, on delivering over the seven shillings and sixpence, received the bank-note, he would never have heard anything more of the transaction from the other party." [1]

Of course it is easy to exaggerate the impression of De Quincey's abstraction. He read the papers and was interested in current events, though he was prone to reflect away from the facts. His conversation, too, was a strong link between him and his fellows. But though this often started among current events, or even in commonplaces, it was almost sure to become imaginative, speculative, sometimes almost rhapsodic. This was the man's great charm, the charm that attached to him a brilliant follow-

[1] John Hill Burton, *The Book Hunter* (chapter entitled "Papaverius," quoted by Hogg, *ibid.*, p. 255).

ing and a romantic interest, heightening his fame to this day. His essay on "Conversation" shows his ideals and gives some hint of his power. What he was in congenial company appears in the following:

"He did not quite, as Burton had told me he would do, talk magazine articles, but the literary habit was notable, though not in the least obtrusive, in all his talk. One effect of this was somewhat trying to an inexperienced listener; for when in the flow of his conversation he came to the close of one of his beautifully rounded and balanced paragraphs, he would pause in order to allow you to have your say, with the result sometimes of rather taking one aback, especially as the subject of conversation often seemed to have been brought, by his conduct of it, to its complete and legitimate conclusion. The listener was apt to feel that he had perorated rather than paused. In his mode of conversing, as in everything else, his courtesy of manner was observable. He never monopolised talk, allowed every one to have a fair chance, and listened with respectful patience to the most commonplace remarks from any one present. The fact that any one was, for the time, a member of the company in which he also happened to be, evidently in his eyes entitled the speaker to all consideration and respect. But he had a just horror of bores, and carefully avoided them." [1]

"His voice was extraordinary; it came as if from dreamland; but it was the most musical and impressive of voices. In convivial life, what then seemed to me the most remarkable trait of De Quincey's character, was the power he possessed of easily changing the tone of ordinary thought and conversation into that of his own dreamland, till his auditors, with wonder, found themselves moving pleasantly along with him in a sphere of which they might have heard and read, perhaps, but which had ever appeared to them inaccessible, and far, far away. Seeing that he was always good-natured and social, he would take part, at commencement, in any sort of tattle or twaddle. The talk might be of 'beeves,' and he could grapple with them if expected to do so, but his musical cadences were not in keeping with such work, and in a few minutes (not without some strictly logical sequence) he could escape at will from beeves to butterflies, and thence to the soul's immortality; to Plato, and Kant, and Schelling, and Fichte; to Milton's early years, and Shakespeare's sonnets; to

[1] J. R. Findlay, *ibid.*, p. 127.

Wordsworth and Coleridge; to Homer and Æschylus; to St. Thomas of Aquin, St. Basil, and St. Chrysostom. But he by no means excluded themes from real life, according to his view of that life, but would recount profound mysteries from his own experiences—visions that had come over him in his loneliest walks among the mountains, and passages within his own personal knowledge, illustrating, if not proving, the doctrines of dreams, of warnings, of second sight, and mesmerism. And whatever the subject might be, every one of his sentences (or of his chapters, I might say) was woven into the most perfect logical texture, and uttered in a tone of sustained melody." [1]

"Presently the flood of talk passes forth from them, free, clear, and continuous—never rising into declamation, never losing a certain mellow earnestness, and all consisting of sentences as exquisitely jointed together as if they were destined to challenge the criticism of the remotest posterity. Still the hours stride over each other, and still flows on the stream of gentle rhetoric, as if it were *labitur et labetur in omne volubilis ævum*. It is now far into the night, and slight hints and suggestions are propagated about separation and home-going. The topic starts new ideas on the progress of civilisation, the effect of habit on man in all ages, and the power of the domestic affections. Descending from generals to the special, he could testify to the inconvenience of late hours; for, was it not the other night that, coming to what was, or what he believed to be, his own door, he knocked and knocked, but the old woman within either couldn't or wouldn't hear him, so he scrambled over a wall, and having taken his repose in a furrow, was able to testify to the extreme unpleasantness of such a couch. The predial groove might indeed nourish kindly the infant seeds and shoots of the peculiar vegetable to which it was appropriated, but was not a comfortable place of repose for adult man." [2]

Perhaps, indeed, he found his most natural expression in talking rather than in writing, and certainly his writing has the discursive character of talk.

With the exception of "The Logic of Political Economy" and the unimportant novel "Klosterheim," De Quincey's work consists entirely of articles for the reviews.

[1] R. P. Gillies, *Memoirs of a Literary Veteran*, *ibid.*, p. 241.
[2] John Hill Burton, *The Book Hunter*, *ibid.*, p. 252.

These cover a very great range of subjects,[1] following his reading, which was wide rather than deep. He made pretensions to scholarship in many fields, but he seems never to have carried on any long and connected research. He was bookish; he preferred reading to writing, his work sometimes "smells of the lamp," and he delights in pedantic foot-notes; but he cannot, except in the precision of his language, be called scholarly. This characteristic of his work is typical both of his habit of mind and of his time.

As a critic his value is perhaps overestimated. On the one hand, he united with Coleridge and Carlyle in introducing English readers to German literature and philosophy. He was also among the first to appreciate the new poetry of Wordsworth and Coleridge, and to contend for its just place in literature. On the other hand, he failed to appreciate French literature, slighted Goethe, scorned Crabbe, preferred Dickens to Thackeray, and ventured to attack the Republic of Plato. A recent writer in the *Saturday Review* (vol. 69, p. 17) charges him with being "destitute of the true critical spirit, the sense of the actual." But there is no doubt that, like Macaulay, he did much to give the average reader a more intelligent interest in literature, and to lead him toward culture. A good example of this valuable service is his illuminative essay "On the Knocking at the Gate in Macbeth."

In any case De Quincey's value as a critic is not the measure of his excellence. His most popular and interesting works, the works by which he himself set most store, are those pieces of imaginative reminiscence beginning

[1] An excellent classification of De Quincey's various writings has been made by Professor Masson in chapter xii. of his life of De Quincey (English Men of Letters Series). Compare also the classification in Dr. Shadworth H. Hodgson's essay on "The Genius of De Quincey" (*Outcast Essays*, reprinted in Hogg's *De Quincey and his Friends*, p. 314).

with the "Confessions of an English Opium-Eater," and proceeding through the "Suspiria de Profundis" (including "Levana," "Savannah-la-Mar," etc.), and the "Autobiographic Sketches," to "The English Mail Coach." Not only did these catch the taste of the time and set a fashion on both sides of the Atlantic,[1] but they also hold a peculiar place in English literature.

## II. The Revolt of the Tartars.[2]

The sub-title of this piece, "Flight of the Kalmuck Khan and his People," is a more accurate description. In order to appreciate the work as a whole, before examining it in detail, it is necessary to know (1) who the Kalmucks are, (2) what are the actual, the historical facts of their revolt, (3) how this historical material was handled by De Quincey.

### A. *The Kalmucks.*

The Kalmucks are Mongol nomads of the Caspian steppes. Thus they belong to that race whose countless hordes crushed alike the armies of China and of Russia in the thirteenth century, seized both thrones, and, pushing far west into Hungary, menaced all Christian Europe.[3] Their famous chief Genghis, or Jingis, Khan (1162–1227) is said to have ruled over the largest empire ever brought under a single man. Even Timur (died, 1405), a much

[1] Note, for instance, Hawthorne's shorter pieces; and, later, Mitchell's *Reveries of a Bachelor* and *Dream Life*.

[2] Published in *Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine*, 1837; republished in Hogg's collective edition, *Selections, Grave and Gay, from Writings Published and Unpublished, by Thomas De Quincey*, 1853–1860, vol. iv. (*Miscellanies*, vol. ii.)

[3] Consult Fisher's *Outlines of Universal History*, pp. 283, 349, 351; Ploetz's *Epitome of Universal History*, pp. 240, 242, 277; or a cyclopædia, under the headings Genghis Khan, Tamerlane, Mongols.

lesser chief, became, in the literature of western Europe, a proverb of wonderful conquest under the name of Tamerlane.

But no stable empire could be built by men so nearly savage and so naturally nomadic. The Mongol hordes, disintegrated and scattered, became so involved with the races among which they wandered, that it is difficult to reach a classification. Thus the Kalmucks are grouped by De Quincey among the Tartars; and though in this he varies from the best authorities of his own time, it is not even yet certain whether he is right or wrong. Probably, however, the Kalmucks are descended, not from the Tartar, but from the Kerait branch of the Mongols. The particular Kalmucks with which De Quincey's narrative has to do were of the tribe called Torguts (Torgotes, Torgouths). In 1616 these Torguts migrated from their country of Sungaria (Jungaria), in Thibet, to the steppes of the Caspian Sea. Though nominally owing allegiance to Russia, they plundered, after their fashion, both the Russian and the Turkish borders, and kept up occasional communication with China. But the connection with Russia gradually strengthening, the Torguts became fairly established in wide camping-grounds, from the Don on the west, to the Jaik (Ural) and the Caspian Sea on the east, and from Tsaritsin on the north, to the slopes of the Caucasus on the south.

As to the main traits of these Mongol nomads all travellers agree. The following extracts are from the narrative of a French engineer, M. de Hell, and his wife:[1]

"The Kalmucks, all of them nomads, are exclusively engaged in rearing cattle, and know nothing whatever of agriculture. They breed camels, oxen, sheep, and, above all, horses, of which they have an excellent breed; small, but strong, agile, and of great endurance.

[1] See Appendix A.

I have ridden a Kalmuck horse often eighteen and even twenty-five leagues without once dismounting. The Russian cavalry is mounted chiefly on horses from the Caspian steppes. . . .

"Among the Asiatic races there is none whose features are so distinctly characterized as those of the Mongols. Paint one individual and you paint the whole nation. . . .

"All the Kalmucks have eyes set obliquely, with eyelids little opened, scanty black eye-brows, noses deeply depressed near the forehead, prominent cheek-bones, spare beards, thin moustaches, and a brownish-yellow skin. The lips of the men are thick and fleshy, but the women, particularly those of high rank, have heart-shaped mouths of no common beauty. All have enormous ears, projecting strongly from the head, and their hair is invariably black. The Kalmucks are generally small, but with figures well rounded, and an easy carriage. . . .

"Like all inhabitants of vast plains, the Kalmucks have exceedingly keen sight. An hour after sunset, they can still distinguish a camel at a distance of three miles or more. . . . They have also an extraordinary faculty for wending their way through their pathless wildernesses. Without the least apparent mark to guide them, they traverse hundreds of miles with their flocks, without ever wandering from the right course.

"The costume of the common Kalmucks is not marked by any very decided peculiarity, the cap alone excepted. It is invariably of yellow cloth trimmed with black lambskin, and is worn by both sexes. I am even tempted to think that there are some superstitious notions connected with it, seeing the difficulty I experienced in procuring one as a specimen. The trousers are wide and open below. Persons in good circumstances wear two long tunics, one of which is tied round the waist, but the usual dress consists only of trousers and a jacket of skin, with tight sleeves. . . . The men shave a part of their heads, and the rest of the hair is gathered into a single mass, which hangs on their shoulders. The women wear two tresses, and this is really the only visible criterion of their sex. The princes have almost all adopted the Circassian costume, or the uniform of the Cossacks of Astrakhan, to which body some of them belong. The ordinary foot-gear is red boots with very high heels, and generally much too short. The Kalmucks, like the Chinese greatly admire small feet; and as they are constantly on horseback, their short boots, which would be torturing to us, cause them no inconvenience. But they are very bad pedestrians; the form of their boots obliges them

to walk on their toes, and they are exceedingly distressed when they have not a horse to mount. . . .

"The Kalmucks, like all pastoral people, live very frugally. Dairy produce forms their chief aliment, and their favourite beverage is tea. They eat meat also, particularly horse flesh, which they prefer to any other, but very well done, and not raw, as some writers have asserted. . . .

"Their dwellings are felt tents, called *kibitkas* by the Russians. They are four or five yards in diameter, cylindrical to the height of a man's shoulder, with a conical top, open at the apex to let the smoke escape. The frame is light, and can be taken asunder for the convenience of carriage. The skeleton of the roof consists of a wooden ring, forming the aperture for the smoke, and of a great number of small spars supporting the ring, and resting on the upper circumference of the cylindrical frame. The whole tent is light enough to be carried by two camels. A *kibitka* serves for a whole family; men, women, and children sleep in it promiscuously without any separation. In the centre there is always a trivet, on which stands the pot used for cooking tea and meat. The floor is partly covered with felts, carpets, and mats; the couches are opposite the door, and the walls of the tent are hung with arms, leathern vessels, household utensils, quarters of meat, etc."

The religion of the Kalmucks is Lamaism or Lamanism. The priests are called Lamas, and the two chief Lamas in Thibet occupy much the same position as the mediæval Popes, in that their supremacy is temporal as well as spiritual.[1] Of these two the Dalai-Lama, though spiritually only the peer, is temporally the superior of the Bantshin Lama. This Thibetan hierarchy is, of course, weakened by the increasing pressure of civilization. But at the time of which De Quincey writes, it was practically unimpaired. In fact, it was probably the moving power in the great migration.

Lamaism is the degraded form of Buddhism developed in Thibet and subsequently reformed by Tsong-Kaba. It is remarkable for an elaborate liturgy, an inordinate num-

[1] See the notes on **13** 17 and **14** 10.

ber of priests (lamas) of various degrees, and, in spite of the perfunctory and superstitious manner in which most of the Kalmucks perform its rites, for a strong hold upon its followers. Not only are these nomads distinctly religious, but they have resisted centuries of missionary influence, both Christian and Mohammedan.[1]

## B. *The Revolt.*

In the winter of 1770–1771, almost the entire tribe of Torguts, to the number of perhaps 400,000 souls, revolted in a body from Russia, and withdrew across the Kirghiz steppes to the frontiers of China. The cause of this remarkable migration is doubtful. The earliest account, that of Father Amiot,[2] assigns two reasons: (1) political—the increasing interference of Russia with the nomadic independence of the Torguts; (2) religious—the growing danger of isolation, among encroaching Christians and Mohammedans, from the source and strength of Lamaism. This is the most reasonable explanation thus far offered. De Quincey, however, adopted the interpretation of Bergmann, which makes the revolt a plot of vengeance carried out by a Torgut prince named Zebek Dorchi.

In order to place this strange episode in relation to the greater movements of its time, observe what it meant, first to China, then to Russia. China, it would appear, had been scheming to recall the Torguts to their old home in Sungaria, which had since been brought more fully under Chinese control. Perhaps the astute emperor, Kien Long, thought to steal the defenders of the Russian frontier for

[1] An excellent philosophical account of Lamaism has been written by Professor Rhys-Davids for the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* For a more popular account, abounding in interesting anecdote, see the travels of Father Huc, cited in Appendix A, especially vol. i., p. 116, and vol. ii., pp. 148 and 212.

[2] See Appendix A.

the defense of his own frontier. This, taken conversely, shows the significance of the revolt to Russia. But an added significance on this side appears in the time of its occurrence. It happened just after the great plague at Moscow, and during a period of widespread popular restlessness and discontent which culminated in the rebellion of Pougatchef, the false Peter III. Rambaud [1] thus summarizes the connection:

"The Cossacks of the Jaïk and the Don, and the Zaporogues of the Dnieper, chafed under the new yoke [*i. e.*, the Russian yoke] of authority. The tribes of the Volga (Pagan, Mussulman, or Christian, in spite of themselves) only awaited a pretext to recover their lawless liberty, or to reclaim the lands which the Russian colonists had usurped.

"How little these ungovernable elements accommodated themselves to the laws of a modern State was seen when, in 1770, the Kalmuck-Torgaouts (men, women, and children), to the number of about 300,000, with their cattle, their tents, and their carts, abandoned their encampments. Ravaging everything in their road, they crossed the Volga, and retired to the territory of the empire of China. When we add to these malcontents the vagabonds of all kinds—the disfrocked monks, the military deserters, fugitive serfs, highwaymen, and Volga pirates—we shall see that Russia, especially in her Oriental part, contained all the materials necessary for an immense Jacquerie."

Thus Catherine II. had two main motives in the apparently foolish pursuit of the Kalmucks: (1) her supremacy over the nomad hordes was at stake; (2) one of her pet projects was to increase the scanty population of her vast territory. This latter purpose, in spite of the introduction of German colonists, had just received so terrible a blow from the ravages of the plague at Moscow that she could hardly endure the loss of a whole tribe, even of nominal subjects. Moreover, there were added two minor considerations: (1) the Kalmucks formed an important part of

[1] *History of Russia*, vol. ii., pp. 133, 134.

her cavalry; and (2) Russia and China were old enemies. It is not surprising, then, that she should have made even so extraordinary an effort to intercept the Kalmuck flight.

### C. *De Quincey's Narrative (in General).*

Now how does this curious chapter of history happen to appear among the writings of De Quincey? In the first place, the range of De Quincey's topics is remarkably wide. It is no more surprising that he should write on "The Revolt of the Tartars" than on "The Toilette of a Hebrew Lady." But we have some hints of nearer reasons. De Quincey's interest in China appears also in two long articles for the *Titan*, reprinted in a pamphlet entitled "China," in 1857. Again, Gibbon, whose great history De Quincey knew well, mentions the revolt in his twenty-sixth chapter, and adds a note (51) referring to the narrative of Father Amiot. Finally, in De Quincey's "Homer and the Homeridæ," appears this passage:

> "Some years ago I published a paper on the Flight of the Kalmuck Tartars from Russia. Bergmann, the German from whom that account was chiefly drawn, resided for a long time among the Kalmucks, and had frequent opportunities of hearing musical recitations selected from the 'Dschangaeriade.' This is the great Tartar epic," [1] etc.

Perhaps De Quincey consulted Bergmann's book merely for further evidence as to the extent and accuracy of oral epic traditions. At any rate, by whatever chain of connection, he became fascinated by another part of the book, the story of the Kalmuck revolt.

From this starting point how did De Quincey proceed? Nowadays the plan would be, even if an author intended merely an historical romance, to consult all the authorita-

[1] Pp. 388, 389, in Hogg's edition.

tive accounts, compare them, and settle upon the true version, or choose the most interesting. De Quincey puts his piece forward as history, and accurate history, but apparently he knew only Bergmann's account, and certainly he followed or abandoned this at will.[1]

Such a method, if the piece were to be judged as history, would be open to serious charges. But what De Quincey really desired and achieved was not an accurate account; it was an imaginative realization. Paragraphs 1–3 announce this point of view; it appears again strikingly in paragraphs 17, 20, and 29; it leads to a final climax in paragraphs 38–41. Bergmann's narrative suggested to De Quincey's imagination vivid pictures of great empires, vast distances, unspeakable horror and misery. These pictures are the basis and the strength of the piece. All the rest is merely subsidiary—often striking or penetrative, sometimes mistaken or absurd, but essentially subsidiary. In short, the piece is not so much a work of history as a work of poetry. In order to appreciate this more fully, it is necessary to examine the style in detail.

### D. *De Quincey's Narrative (in Detail).*

In studying the style of De Quincey, as it appears in this piece, two main points are to be considered: (1) the construction, the way in which the piece is put together, as a whole, and in its separate paragraphs and sentences; (2) the diction, that is, the habit of language, the choice of words.

i. *The construction of the whole.*—De Quincey places as the culmination of the revolt the scene at Lake Tengis, the frightful battle in the water. Bergmann says that after this the Kalmucks had still to skirmish with the tribes

[1] For a detailed examination of the correspondences and variations, see Appendix C.

beyond. Why did De Quincey change the place of this incident? Plainly to gain a climax (see **32** 26–35); that is, to lead up through the various ills of the march to this most striking horror of all. After this, in his narrative, there is simply the brief subsidence into rest at the end. Here is seen the literary principle of emphasis, which may be stated simply as follows: important parts should have important places. Above all, the interest should increase up to the climax. In another view, the law of emphasis is a law of proportion. The important parts must not only have important places, they must also have most space. In this view the "Revolt of the Tartars" is not so excellent. The introduction is disproportionately long; for the action does not begin until page 26, and there are only sixty-six pages in all.

This consideration leads naturally to a second recognized law of literature, the principle of unity (see **4** 16), which requires that every part of a piece should contribute to one main interest, should unite to produce one main effect. The principle is not carefully observed in this piece; but it will be seen that the various interests of the Russian commandant, Kichinskoi, the scheming Zebek Dorchi, the bloodthirsty Kirghises, the emperor of China,—all combine pretty well to increase one main interest, the tragic greatness and horror of the Kalmuck flight. To this there is one exception, the parenthetical story of the Russian Weseloff (paragraphs 34 and 35). But here De Quincey had at least more art than Bergmann, who tacked the story on at the end. And notice that De Quincey is careful to unite even this with the main narrative by the scene in which Weseloff saves the life of the Khan.

Indeed, the "Revolt of the Tartars" has more unity than is at all common in De Quincey. The most serious charge brought against his writing is that it abounds in digressions. Instead of talking about the one thing that

is put forth as his subject, he seems to be talking of whatever comes into his head. For example, the piece entitled "The Nation of London,"[1] opens as follows, the parentheses indicating digressions:

I. London exercises a visible attraction throughout the kingdom [two-page foot-note on ancient Rome].

II. Our approach was through rural suburbs, not by any great road [On the great roads how different the approach! (1) in the premonitions of the metropolis (note on *trepidation* and *agitation*), (2) in the sense of losing one's identity in the throng—two pages].

III. I remember the awe of our arrival.

IV. What should we go to see? There were so many things to see that we could decide on nothing. [I have had in my life three great disappointments—(1) in a painting of Cape Horn (just as people have been disappointed [though, by the way, less reasonably] in the view from Mount Etna, one page); (2) in Garrick's farewell; (3) in the inauguration of George IV. (the very idea of Garrick's farewell was as absurd as our present dilemma—one page)].

This habit of corkscrewing through an essay is due somewhat to the fact that from such magazine articles the editors and their readers expected, not the development of a definite line of thought on a fixed subject, but a stream of literary talk. Often, in fact, there is no subject, properly speaking. One of these articles is simply so many pages of reminiscence, brought to a graceful close when the author was tired, or the editor had no more space. But the habit is due mainly to De Quincey's vivid imagination. One picture called up another, until sometimes his very strength in suggestion betrayed him into weakness.

To whatever due, this discursive habit is De Quincey's great fault—a fault that runs through most of his work.

[1] *Autobiographic Sketches*, vol. i. De Quincey tells how he first went up to London with Lord Westport.

What was pardonable in reminiscence became unpardonable in the critical essays. It is not enough to say that he never lost his way, that he eventually came back to the point, or even that the digressions are often delightful in themselves. There is no denying the grave defect in art. What should be said, however, is that he is capable of perfect unity, for that adds a peculiar charm to "Levana."

Coherence is a convenient name for the third great principle of literary construction, which demands that the parts should succeed in natural order, without break or jar. Run through the essay rapidly, pausing only to observe how carefully, in most cases, the beginning of each paragraph refers to the thought of the preceding, and leads up to the new stage of the story.[1] This skill in coherence, extending to the nicest adjustment of details, always does much to relieve the strain of De Quincey's digressions.

ii. *Construction of separate paragraphs.*—Now test the paragraphs separately by these three principles of emphasis, unity, and coherence. For instance, note the emphatic close of paragraph 1; test some of the long paragraphs to see if they contain digressions, or give too much space to subordinate matters; finally, observe how carefully De Quincey is wont to put near the beginning of each sentence some word, some conjunction, some demonstrative, some important noun repeated, to make a coupling with the preceding sentence. For example, in paragraph 6 (11 19): "The very hopelessness of the scheme grounded his hope, and he resolved to execute a vengeance which should involve, as it were, in the unity of a well-laid tragic fable, all whom he judged to be his enemies. *That vengeance* lay," etc.

iii. *Construction of sentences.* — De Quincey's sentences are long and somewhat formal. He was too re-

[1] This survey may be helped by the paragraph summaries in the notes.

flective, and too fond of fine distinctions, to cultivate the loose, brisk style of disconnected short sentences. So his sentences sound deliberate. Notice the following (18 26): "Meantime, how much it must have co-operated with the other motives previously acting upon Oubacha in sustaining his determination to revolt, and how powerfully it must have assisted the efforts of all the Tartar chieftains in preparing the minds of their people to feel the necessity of this difficult enterprise, by arming their pride and their suspicions against the Russian Government, through the keenness of their sympathy with the wrongs of their insulted prince, may be readily imagined." This suspended form of sentence, which remains incomplete till the last word, is called periodic. It is a favourite form with many classical writers, for instance, Cicero. De Quincey may have caught it either directly from the classics or indirectly from Sir Thomas Browne and his other favourite seventeenth-century authors.

iv. *Diction.*—The term *imaginative* gives the key to De Quincey's choice of words because it gives the key to his method. In the preface to his "Autobiographic Sketches," he says:

"On these (*i.e.*, *Confessions*, *Suspiria*, etc.), as modes of impassioned prose ranging under no precedents that I am aware of in any literature, it is much more difficult to speak justly. . . . Two remarks only I shall address to the equity of my reader. First, I desire to remind him of the perilous difficulty besieging all attempts to clothe in words the visionary scenes derived from the world of dreams, where a single false note, a single word in a wrong key, ruins the whole music; and, secondly, I desire him to consider the utter sterility of universal literature in this one department of impassioned prose."[1]

The "impassioned prose"[2] of which De Quincey speaks

[1] *Autobiographic Sketches*, i., xvii. (Hogg's edition).

[2] See Professor Masson's *Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Other Essays*, p. 257.

is hardly to be expected in the historical and critical pieces. But if it appears in only a few pages of the "Revolt of the Tartars," those pages are the best. They are pre-eminently paragraphs 38 and 41, but also detached passages throughout the piece; for instance, pages 42, 43. This style, though it is individual enough to give De Quincey's boast some countenance, nevertheless smacks of his time. Professor Masson[1] thinks it smacks also of Jean Paul Richter.

Such a style expresses itself naturally in figures. Note the metaphor of the worm and the behemoth (**11** 10), of the unrolling of a great scroll (**30** 7), and compare others; but note also that even where there are no explicit figures such as metaphors or similes, there is an habitual suggestion of images. The passage from **32** 33 to **33** 2 shows how De Quincey, so to speak, thought in images.

Combined with this imaginative and figurative cast it is somewhat surprising to find, what is equally characteristic of De Quincey, a peculiarly fine precision. The only way to appreciate this justly is to scrutinize his words, to test them with the aid of a good dictionary. In the notes many words are marked for such examination. Often the nicety of a phrase will be found to reside in the suggestion of its etymology. De Quincey felt this keenly. In fact, he went even to the extent of pedantry in refining upon derivatives from Greek and Latin.

Greek and Latin derivatives, especially the latter, predominate in his writing, partly because he was fond of the classics, partly because he preferred dignified and sonorous phrases, mainly because he insisted upon elegant precision. Examine, for instance, the proportion of classical derivatives in paragraphs 2 and 3, express some of the sentences in native words, and note the different effect. It will be simpler, more direct; but simplicity and directness are not

[1] *Life of De Quincey*, p. 192.

in De Quincey's aim or habit. Even these "barbarous and semi-humanised" Kalmucks are made to express themselves with the same choiceness and dignity. Everybody in the story talks like De Quincey, and De Quincey always talks like himself. And instead of judging the work by a standard he would not have owned, instead of dwelling on those aspects in which it is inferior alike to the latest pamphlet of special research and the latest dialect story, it is much more profitable to keep in mind his ideal of elegant precision subservient to a high imagination, and to observe how nearly that ideal was attained.

## SUGGESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

The list of books in Appendix A is intended for such teachers as wish to make more than a superficial examination of the historical basis. Appendices B and C are intended for the student also; but these and all the rest of the critical apparatus should be postponed until the essay has been carefully read.

For the life of De Quincey nothing should be allowed to take the place of De Quincey's own records, especially since he never wrote so well as when he wrote of himself. The briefest, most orderly, most convenient biography is that by Leslie Stephen in the "Dictionary of National Biography." Professor Masson's biography in the English Men of Letters Series (Harper and Brothers) contains a compact body of valuable criticism. The "Life of De Quincey" by H. A. Page (2 vols., New York, 1877) contains many interesting letters, but is ill put together. Mr. Page, this time under his proper name, Dr. Alexander H. Japp, has collected two more volumes of letters and comment under the title of "De Quincey Memorials" (United States Book Co., 1891). The collection corrects one's impressions of De Quincey in minor details, but hardly adds anything to the total estimate. Mr. James Hogg has collected in one volume the most interesting published reminiscences of De Quincey, and has added some equally interesting reminiscences of his own ("De Quincey and his Friends": London, 1895). This collection relates mainly to the Edinburgh period. It contains, among less important matter, Woodhouse's notes of conversations with De Quincey, John Hill Burton's chap-

ter entitled "Papaverius" in "The Book Hunter," and the recollections of Findlay, Colin Rae-Brown, Jacox, and James Payn. Dr. Shadworth Hodgson's "The Genius of De Quincey," is also reprinted from "Outcast Essays."

The most careful and specific examination of the style of De Quincey will be found in Minto's "Manual of English Prose Literature" (Ginn and Co.), part i., chapter i. Among Professor Masson's earlier essays is one on De Quincey's "impassioned prose" ("Wordsworth, Shelley, Keats, and Other Essays," p. 257). Finally, Professor Masson's new edition of De Quincey's works (Edinburgh: Adam and Charles Black) should be consulted freely.

Believing that the study of literature in preparatory schools may be orderly and definite without losing either its value or its interest, the editor has grouped his remarks on the style under specific headings. The purpose of this definiteness is, not to insist on certain terms, nor to exclude other sorts of comment. It aims simply to help the student to order his impressions, and to suggest to the teacher a method. The terms there used are at the basis of Professor Wendell's "English Composition;" they appear also in the text-books of Professors Genung,[1] Hill, and Carpenter; and, finally, they are themselves suggestive. For all these reasons they seem to offer one convenient means toward combining the study of literature with the study of rhetoric, the examination of models with the actual practice in composition.

Another method of combination is the obvious one of making the pupil write essays about the book he is reading. It is customary, for instance, to require summaries of the pieces read, and compositions on their various phases. In this sort of work two methods are useful—first, to set topics for detached paragraphs (De Quincey's Object in Writing the Piece, De Quincey's Peculiar Habits, The Plan

[1] For *emphasis* Professor Genung's term is *proportion*.

of Zebek Dorchi, The Relations of the Kalmucks to Russia, etc.), insisting on a fair degree of unity in each paragraph; second, to inculcate habits of order by furnishing at the beginning plans for the more extended essays. Take a single instance:

*De Quincey's Knowledge of the Classics.*

1. The training of an English boy in Latin and Greek is long and thorough.

2. In De Quincey's case this training was made still more effective by his bent in that direction.

3. The value of such training, in general, is—etc.

4. In De Quincey's writing this training appears—etc.

The putting of such paragraph summaries into sentences, instead of mere topical headings, tends to induce paragraph unity. Care in expressing the connection between these sentences induces coherence in the whole composition.[1] After setting two or three such plans, the teacher may call upon the pupil to provide his own.

But if, instead of writing only about this piece, the student should try his own hand at scenes from the battle of Marathon, or the march of Hannibal, or some of the famous expeditions referred to in paragraph 20, and "required" for entrance examinations, the practice might be at least equally valuable. At any rate, he might then cease to think that his composition must be about literature, must be critical, and might discover its vital relation to his other studies.

Every pupil of any imagination will be interested in De Quincey's "Confessions," and the kindred pieces of reminiscence. Read selections from these pieces in class, and encourage further reading at home.[2] That will do quite

[1] This method is followed in the paragraph summaries of the notes.

[2] *The English Mail Coach* is published in Cassell's National Library (paper) at ten cents, together with *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts.* The latter is neither so useful nor so interesting.

as much in some cases as specific study. Moreover, these are more characteristic of De Quincey and better as literature than the "Revolt of the Tartars." And, finally, it is not necessary to apply the study of a piece of literature to the study of composition. For further suggestions the teacher is referred to the preceding pages on style and to the notes.

## CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.

(Compiled from "Lowndes's Bibliographer's Manual," The Dictionary of National Biography, Ryland's "Chronological Outlines of English Literature," and Whitcomb's "Chronological Outlines of American Literature.")

| Life of De Quincey. | Contemporary Literature. | Contemporary History. |
|---|---|---|
| 1785. De Quincey born. | | |
| | 1788. Byron born. | 1788. United States Constitution ratified by eleven States. |
| | | 1789. Washington President. Opening of the French Revolution. |
| | 1790. Burke, Reflections on the Revolution in France. | |
| | 1792. Shelley born. | |
| | | 1793. Whitney invented the cotton-gin. |
| | 1795. Carlyle and Keats born. | |
| 1796. Bath Grammar School. | | |
| | | 1797. John Adams President. |
| | 1798. Wordsworth and Coleridge, Lyrical Ballads. | |
| 1800. Winkfield School. Visit to Ireland with Lord Westport, and to Lady Carbery at Laxton. | 1800. Macaulay born. | 1800. Union of Great Britain and Ireland. |
| 1801. Manchester Grammar School. | | 1801. Jefferson President. |
| 1802. Escape from school. Wanderings in Wales and London. | | |
| 1803. Oxford: Worcester College. | | 1803. Louisiana Purchase. |
| | | 1804. Napoleon Emperor. |
| | 1805. Scott, Lay of the Last Minstrel. | |
| | 1806. Coleridge, Christabel. | |
| 1807. Meeting with Coleridge and Wordsworth. | | |
| 1808. London, brief law studies. | | |
| 1809. Grasmere. | | 1809. Madison President. |
| | 1810. Scott, The Lady of the Lake. | |
| | 1811. Jane Austen, Sense and Sensibility. | |
| | 1812. Byron, Childe Harold (i. and ii.). | 1812-14. War between England and the United States. |
| | 1814. Scott, Waverley. | |

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.— *Continued.*

| Life of De Quincey. | Contemporary Literature. | Contemporary History. |
|---|---|---|
| | 1815. Wordsworth, The White Doe of Rylstone. | 1815. Battle of Waterloo. Stevenson's first locomotive. |
| 1816. Married Margaret Simpson. | 1816. Shelley, Alastor. | |
| | 1818. Keats, Endymion. | |
| 1819. Studies in political economy. Editor of the Westmoreland Gazette. | 1819. Byron, Don Juan (i. and ii.). Irving,† The Sketch-Book. | 1819. Purchase of Florida. Steamers began to cross the Atlantic. |
| | 1820. Keats, Lamia, and other poems. Scott, Ivanhoe. Shelley, Prometheus Unbound. | |
| 1821. London. *Confessions of an English Opium-Eater** and translations from Richter in The London Magazine. Other articles (1822–1824): *Letters to a Young Man whose Education has been Neglected, Rosicrucians and Freemasons, Dialogues of Three Templars.* | | 1821. War of Grecian independence. |
| | 1822. Lamb, Essays of Elia. | |
| | 1824. Landor, Imaginary Conversations (i.). | |
| | 1825. Macaulay, Essay on Milton. | 1825. J. Q. Adams President. |
| 1826. Translation of Lessing's Laocoön. | | |
| 1827. *Murder Considered as one of the Fine Arts* (in Blackwood's Edinburgh Magazine). | 1827. Alfred and Charles Tennyson, Poems. | |
| 1828–33. Edinburgh. Articles in Blackwood: *Toilette of a Hebrew Lady, Dr. Parr and his Contemporaries, The Caesars* (a series), *Charlemagne, Traditions of the Rabbins.* | 1828. Irving,† Columbus. | |
| | | 1829. Jackson President. Catholic Emancipation Act in England. |
| | 1830. Tennyson, Poems, Chiefly Lyrical. | 1830. William IV. King of England. |

* The titles of De Quincey's works are indicated by italics.
† American authors are thus indicated.

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.—*Continued.*

| Life of De Quincey. | Contemporary Literature. | Contemporary History. |
|---|---|---|
| | 1831. Poe,† Poems. Whittier,† Legends of New England. | |
| 1832. *Klosterheim* (a novel). | | 1832. English Reform Bill passed. |
| | 1833. Carlyle, Sartor Resartus. Browning, Pauline. | 1833. Abolition of slavery throughout the British Empire. |
| 1834–40. Autobiographic sketches in Tait's Edinburgh Magazine. | | |
| | 1836. Dickens, Pickwick. Holmes,† Poems. | |
| 1837. Mrs. De Quincey died. *Shakspere, Pope* (in Encyclopædia Britannica). Flight of a Tartar Tribe (in Blackwood). | 1837. Carlyle, The French Revolution. Prescott,† Ferdinand and Isabella. Hawthorne,† Twice-Told Tales. | 1837. Van Buren President. Victoria Queen of England. |
| | 1838. Dickens, Nicholas Nickleby. | |
| 1840. Cottage (Mavis Bush) at Lasswade. | 1840. Poe,† Tales of the Grotesque and Arabesque. | |
| 1840–46. Articles in Blackwood: *The Essenes, Style and Rhetoric, Homer and the Homeridæ, Berkeley and Idealism, Cicero, Benjamin of Tudela, The Logic of Political Economy, Suspiria de Profundis.* | | |
| 1841–43. Glasgow, long visits at the houses of Professor Lushington and Professor Nichol. | 1841. Browning, Pippa Passes. Carlyle, Heroes and Hero-Worship. Emerson,† Essays. | 1841. Harrison President. Tyler President. |
| | 1843. Macaulay, Essays. Ruskin, Modern Painters (i.). | |
| | | 1844. Morse telegraph. |
| | 1845. Carlyle, Cromwell. Poe,† The Raven and Other Poems. | 1845. Polk President. |
| | | 1845–48. War between the United States and Mexico. |
| 1847. Glasgow again, in lodgings, to assist in establishing the new North British Daily Mail and the transferred Tait's Magazine. *The Spanish Military Nun, Joan of Arc.* | 1847. Charlotte Bronte, Jane Eyre. Tennyson, The Princess. Thackeray, Vanity Fair. Longfellow,† Evangeline. | |

CHRONOLOGICAL TABLE.—*Concluded.*

| Life of De Quincey. | Contemporary Literature. | Contemporary History. |
|---|---|---|
| 1848-59. Edinburgh, most of the time in lodgings. | 1848. Macaulay, History of England (i. and ii.). Lowell,† A Fable for Critics. | 1848. Second French Republic. Gold discovered in California. |
| 1849. *The English Mail Coach.* | | 1849. Taylor President. |
| | 1850. Tennyson, In Memoriam. Hawthorne,† The Scarlet Letter. | 1850. Fillmore President. |
| 1851-52. American collective edition of De Quincey's works (J. T. Fields). | | |
| | | 1852. Napoleon III. Emperor. |
| 1853. English collective edition (James Hogg) begun. | | 1853. Pierce President. |
| | 1854. Thoreau,† Walden. | 1854. Crimean War. |
| | 1856. Motley,† The Rise of the Dutch Republic. | |
| 1857. Visit to his eldest daughter, Mrs. Craig, in Ireland. | | 1857. Buchanan President. The Dred Scott decision. |
| | 1858. Tennyson, Idylls of the King. | |
| 1859. Death, December 8th. | 1859. George Eliot, Adam Bede. George Meredith, Richard Feverel. | 1859. Darwin published The Origin of Species. John Brown's raid on Harper's Ferry. |

# REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

## PERSONS OF THE STORY.*

OUBACHA, *Khan of the Kalmucks.*

ZEBEK-DORCHI, *a Kalmuck chief, instigator of the flight.*

EREMPEL, *father-in-law to Zebek-Dorchi,* } *conspirators with Zebek-Dorchi.*

LOOSANG-DCHALTZAN, *Grand Lama of the Volga Kalmucks,* } *conspirators with Zebek-Dorchi.*

WESELOFF, *a Russian gentleman, prisoner among the Kalmucks.*

ELIZABETH PETROWNA, *Empress of Russia.*

CATHERINE II., *Empress of Russia, successor to Elizabeth.*

KIEN LONG, *Emperor of China.*

BEKETOFF, *Russian Governor of Astrakhan.*

KICHINSKOI, *Russian Commissioner to the Volga Kalmucks.*

TRAUBENBERG, *general in command of the Russian pursuit.*

* Inserted by the editor.

# REVOLT OF THE TARTARS

## OR, FLIGHT OF THE KALMUCK KHAN AND HIS PEOPLE FROM THE RUSSIAN TERRITORIES TO THE FRONTIERS OF CHINA

1. THERE is no great event in modern history, or, perhaps it may be said more broadly, none in all history, from its earliest records, less generally known, or more striking to the imagination, than the flight eastwards of a principal Tartar nation across the boundless *steppes* of Asia in the latter half of the last century. The *terminus a quo* of this flight, and the *terminus ad quem*, are equally magnificent; the mightiest of Christian thrones being the one, the mightiest of Pagan the other. And the grandeur of these two terminal objects is harmoniously supported by the romantic circumstances of the flight. In the abruptness of its commencement, and the fierce velocity of its execution, we read the wild barbaric character of those who conducted the movement. In the unity of purpose connecting this myriad of wills, and in the blind but unerring aim at a mark so remote, there is something which recalls to the mind those almighty instincts that propel the migrations of the swallow and the leeming, or the life-withering marches of the locust. Then, again, in the gloomy vengeance of Russia and her vast artillery, which hung upon the rear and the skirts of the fugitive vassals, we are reminded of Miltonic images—such, for instance, as that

of the solitary hand pursuing through desert spaces and through ancient chaos a rebellious host, and overtaking with volleying thunders those who believed themselves already within the security of darkness and of distance.

2. I shall have occasion, farther on, to compare this event with other great national catastrophes as to the magnitude of the suffering. But it may also challenge a comparison with similar events under another relation, viz., as to its dramatic capabilities. Few cases, perhaps, in romance or history, can sustain a close collation with this as to the *complexity* of its separate interests. The great outline of the enterprise, taken in connection with the operative motives, hidden or avowed, and the religious sanctions under which it was pursued, give to the case a triple character: 1st, that of a *conspiracy*, with as close a unity in the incidents, and as much of a personal interest in the moving characters, with fine dramatic contrasts, as belongs to "Venice Preserved," or to the "Fiesco" of Schiller; 2dly, that of a great *military expedition*, offering the same romantic features of vast distances to be traversed, vast reverses to be sustained, untried routes, enemies obscurely ascertained, and hardships too vaguely prefigured, which mark the Egyptian expedition of Cambyses—which mark the anabasis of the younger Cyrus, and the subsequent retreat of the ten thousand—which mark the Parthian expeditions of the Romans, especially those of Crassus and Julian—or (as more disastrous than any of them, and, in point of space as well as in amount of forces, more extensive) the Russian anabasis and katabasis of Napoleon; 3dly, that of a religious *Exodus*, authorised by an oracle venerated throughout many nations of Asia, an Exodus, therefore, in so far resembling the great Scriptural Exodus of the Israelites, under Moses and Joshua, as well as in the very peculiar distinction of carrying along with them

their entire families, women, children, slaves, their herds of cattle and of sheep, their horses and their camels.

3. This triple character of the enterprise naturally invests it with a more comprehensive interest. But the dramatic interest which I have ascribed to it, or its fitness for a stage representation, depends partly upon the marked variety and the strength of the personal agencies concerned, and partly upon the succession of scenical situations. Even the *steppes*, the camels, the tents, the snowy and the sandy deserts, are not beyond the scale of our modern representative powers, as often called into action in the theatres both of Paris and London; and the series of situations unfolded,—beginning with the general conflagration on the Wolga—passing thence to the disastrous scenes of the flight (as it *literally* was in its commencement)—to the Tartar siege of the Russian fortress Koulagina—the bloody engagement with the Cossacks in the mountain passes at Ouchim—the surprisal by the Bashkirs, and the advanced posts of the Russian army at Torgau—the private conspiracy at this point against the Khan—the long succession of running fights—the parting massacres at the Lake of Tengis under the eyes of the Chinese—and, finally, the tragical retribution to Zebek-Dorchi at the hunting lodge of the Chinese Emperor;—all these situations communicate a *scenical* animation to the wild romance, if treated dramatically; whilst a higher and a philosophic interest belongs to it as a case of authentic history, commemorating a great revolution for good and for evil in the fortunes of a whole people—a people semi-barbarous, but simple-hearted, and of ancient descent.

4. On the 21st of January, 1761, the young Prince Oubacha assumed the sceptre of the Kalmucks upon the death of his father. Some part of the power attached to

this dignity he had already wielded since his fourteenth year, in quality of Vice-Khan, by the express appointment and with the avowed support of the Russian Government. He was now about eighteen years of age, amiable in his personal character, and not without titles to respect in his public character as a sovereign prince. In times more peaceable, and amongst a people more entirely civilised, or more humanised by religion, it is even probable that he might have discharged his high duties with considerable distinction. But his lot was thrown upon stormy times, and a most difficult crisis amongst tribes whose native ferocity was exasperated by debasing forms of superstition, and by a nationality as well as an inflated conceit of their own merit absolutely unparalleled, whilst the circumstances of their hard and trying position under the jealous *surveillance* of an irresistible lord paramount, in the person of the Russian Czar, gave a fiercer edge to the natural unamiableness of the Kalmuck disposition, and irritated its gloomier qualities into action under the restless impulses of suspicion and permanent distrust. No prince could hope for a cordial allegiance from his subjects or a peaceful reign under the circumstances of the case; for the dilemma in which a Kalmuck ruler stood at present was of this nature: *wanting* the sanction and support of the Czar, he was inevitably too weak from without to command confidence from his subjects, or resistance to his competitors; on the other hand, *with* this kind of support, and deriving his title in any degree from the favour of the Imperial Court, he became almost in that extent an object of hatred at home, and within the whole compass of his own territory. He was at once an object of hatred for the past, being a living monument of national independence ignominiously surrendered, and an object of jealousy for the future, as one who had already advertised himself to be

a fitting tool for the ultimate purposes (whatsoever those might prove to be) of the Russian Court. Coming himself to the Kalmuck sceptre under the heaviest weight of prejudice from the unfortunate circumstances of his position, it might have been expected that Oubacha would have been pre-eminently an object of detestation; for, besides his known dependence upon the Cabinet of St. Petersburg, the direct line of succession had been set aside, and the principle of inheritance violently suspended, in favour of his own father, so recently as nineteen years before the era of his own accession, consequently within the lively remembrance of the existing generation. He therefore, almost equally with his father, stood within the full current of the national prejudices, and might have anticipated the most pointed hostility. But it was not so: such are the caprices in human affairs that he was even, in a moderate sense, popular—a benefit which bore the more cheering aspect, and the promises of permanence, inasmuch as he owed it exclusively to his personal qualities of kindness and affability, as well as to the beneficence of his government. On the other hand, to balance this unlooked-for prosperity at the outset of his reign, he met with a rival in popular favour—almost a competitor—in the person of Zebek Dorchi, a prince with considerable pretensions to the throne, and perhaps, it might be said, with equal pretensions. Zebek-Dorchi was a direct descendant of the same royal house as himself, through a different branch. On public grounds, his claim stood, perhaps, on a footing equally good with that of Oubacha, whilst his personal qualities, even in those aspects which seemed to a philosophical observer most odious and repulsive, promised the most effectual aid to the dark purposes of an intriguer or a conspirator, and were generally fitted to win a popular support precisely in those points where

Oubacha was most defective. He was much superior in external appearance to his rival on the throne, and so far better qualified to win the good opinion of a semi-barbarous people; whilst his dark intellectual qualities of Machiavelian dissimulation, profound hypocrisy, and perfidy which knew no touch of remorse, were admirably calculated to sustain any ground which he might win from the simple-hearted people with whom he had to deal, and from the frank carelessness of his unconscious competitor.

5. At the very outset of his treacherous career, Zebek-Dorchi was sagacious enough to perceive that nothing could be gained by open declaration of hostility to the reigning prince: the choice had been a deliberate act on the part of Russia, and Elizabeth Petrowna was not the person to recall her own favours with levity, or upon slight grounds. Openly, therefore, to have declared his enmity towards his relative on the throne could have had no effect but that of arming suspicions against his own ulterior purposes in a quarter where it was most essential to his interest that, for the present, all suspicion should be hoodwinked. Accordingly, after much meditation, the course he took for opening his snares was this:—He raised a rumour that his own life was in danger from the plots of several Saissang (that is, Kalmuck nobles), who were leagued together, under an oath, to assassinate him; and immediately after, assuming a well-counterfeited alarm, he fled to Tcherkask, followed by sixty-five tents. From this place he kept up a correspondence with the Imperial Court; and, by way of soliciting his cause more effectually, he soon repaired in person to St. Petersburg. Once admitted to personal conferences with the cabinet, he found no difficulty in winning over the Russian counsels to a concurrence with some of his political views, and thus covertly introduc-

ing the point of that wedge which was finally to accomplish his purposes. In particular, he persuaded the Russian Government to make a very important alteration in the constitution of the Kalmuck State Council, which in effect re-organised the whole political condition of the state, and disturbed the balance of power as previously adjusted. Of this council—in the Kalmuck language called Sarga—there were eight members, called Sargatchi; and hitherto it had been the custom that these eight members should be entirely subordinate to the Khan; holding, in fact, the ministerial character of secretaries and assistants, but in no respect acting as co-ordinate authorities. That had produced some inconveniences in former reigns; and it was easy for Zebek-Dorchi to point the jealousy of the Russian Court to others more serious, which might arise in future circumstances of war or other contingencies. It was resolved, therefore, to place the Sargatchi henceforwards on a footing of perfect independence, and therefore (as regarded responsibility) on a footing of equality with the Khan. Their independence, however, had respect only to their own sovereign; for towards Russia they were placed in a new attitude of direct duty and accountability, by the creation in their favour of small pensions (300 roubles a-year), which, however, to a Kalmuck of that day were more considerable than might be supposed, and had a farther value as marks of honorary distinction emanating from a great empress. Thus far the purposes of Zebek-Dorchi were served effectually for the moment: but, apparently, it was only for the moment; since, in the further development of his plots, this very dependency upon Russian influence would be the most serious obstacle in his way. There was, however, another point carried which outweighed all inferior considerations, as it gave him a power of setting aside discretionally what-

soever should arise to disturb his plots: he was himself appointed President and Controller of the Sargatchi. The Russian Court had been aware of his high pretensions by birth, and hoped by this promotion to satisfy the ambition which, in some degree, was acknowledged to be a reasonable passion for any man occupying his situation.

6. Having thus completely blindfolded the Cabinet of Russia, Zebek-Dorchi proceeded in his new character to fulfil his political mission with the Khan of the Kalmucks. So artfully did he prepare the road for his favourable reception at the court of this prince, that he was at once and universally welcomed as a benefactor. The pensions of the counsellors were so much additional wealth poured into the Tartar exchequer; as to the ties of dependency thus created, experience had not yet enlightened these simple tribes as to that result. And that he himself should be the chief of these mercenary counsellors was so far from being charged upon Zebek as any offence or any ground of suspicion, that his relative the Khan returned him hearty thanks for his services, under the belief that he could have accepted this appointment only with a view to keep out other and more unwelcome pretenders, who would not have had the same motives of consanguinity or friendship for executing its duties in a spirit of kindness to the Kalmucks. The first use which he made of his new functions about the Khan's person was to attack the Court of Russia, by a romantic villainy not easy to be credited, for those very acts of interference with the council which he himself had prompted. This was a dangerous step: but it was indispensable to his further advance upon the gloomy path which he had traced out for himself. A triple vengeance was what he meditated: 1. upon the Russian Cabinet for having under-

valued his own pretensions to the throne; 2. upon his amiable rival for having supplanted him; and, 3. upon all those of the nobility who had manifested their sense of his weakness by their neglect, or their sense of his perfidious character by their suspicions. Here was a colossal outline of wickedness; and by one in his situation, feeble (as it might seem) for the accomplishment of its humblest parts, how was the total edifice to be reared in its comprehensive grandeur? He, a worm as he was, could he venture to assail the mighty behemoth of Muscovy, the potentate who counted three hundred languages around the footsteps of his throne, and from whose "lion ramp" recoiled alike "baptized and infidel"—Christendom on the one side, strong by her intellect and her organisation, and the "Barbaric East" on the other, with her unnumbered numbers? The match was a monstrous one; but in its very monstrosity there lay this germ of encouragement, that it could not be suspected. The very hopelessness of the scheme grounded his hope, and he resolved to execute a vengeance which should involve, as it were, in the unity of a well-laid tragic fable, all whom he judged to be his enemies. That vengeance lay in detaching from the Russian Empire the whole Kalmuck nation, and breaking up that system of intercourse which had thus far been beneficial to both. This last was a consideration which moved him but little. True it was, that Russia to the Kalmucks had secured lands and extensive pasturage; true it was, that the Kalmucks reciprocally to Russia had furnished a powerful cavalry. But the latter loss would be part of his triumph, and the former might be more than compensated in other climates under other sovereigns. Here was a scheme which, in its final accomplishment, would avenge him bitterly on the Czarina, and in the course of its accomplishment might

furnish him with ample occasions for removing his other enemies. It may be readily supposed, indeed, that he who could deliberately raise his eyes to the Russian autocrat as an antagonist in single duel with himself was not likely to feel much anxiety about Kalmuck enemies of whatever rank. He took his resolution, therefore, sternly and irrevocably to effect this astonishing translation of an ancient people across the pathless deserts of Central Asia, intersected continually by rapid rivers, rarely furnished with bridges, and of which the fords were known only to those who might think it for their interest to conceal them, through many nations inhospitable or hostile; frost and snow around them (from the necessity of commencing their flight in winter), famine in their front, and the sabre, or even the artillery of an offended and mighty empress, hanging upon their rear for thousands of miles. But what was to be their final mark—the port of shelter after so fearful a course of wandering? Two things were evident: it must be some power at a great distance from Russia, so as to make return even in that view hopeless; and it must be a power of sufficient rank to insure them protection from any hostile efforts on the part of the Czarina for reclaiming them, or for chastising their revolt. Both conditions were united obviously in the person of Kien Long, the reigning Emperor of China, who was further recommended to them by his respect for the head of their religion. To China, therefore, and, as their first rendezvous, to the shadow of the great Chinese Wall, it was settled by Zebek that they should direct their flight.

7. Next came the question of time—*when* should the flight commence? and, finally, the more delicate question as to the choice of accomplices. To extend the knowledge of the conspiracy too far was to insure its betrayal

to the Russian Government. Yet, at some stage of the preparations, it was evident that a very extensive confidence must be made, because in no other way could the mass of the Kalmuck population be persuaded to furnish their families with the requisite equipments for so long a migration. This critical step, however, it was resolved to defer up to the latest possible moment, and, at all events, to make no general communication on the subject until the time of departure should be definitely settled. In the meantime, Zebek admitted only three persons to his confidence; of whom Oubacha, the reigning prince, was almost necessarily one; but him, from his yielding and somewhat feeble character, he viewed rather in the light of a tool than as one of his active accomplices. Those whom (if anybody) he admitted to an unreserved participation in his counsels were two only: the great Lama among the Kalmucks, and his own father-in-law, Erempel, a ruling prince of some tribe in the neighbourhood of the Caspian Sea, recommended to his favour, not so much by any strength of talent corresponding to the occasion, as by his blind devotion to himself, and his passionate anxiety to promote the elevation of his daughter and son-in-law to the throne of the sovereign prince. A titular prince Zebek already was: but this dignity, without the substantial accompaniment of a sceptre, seemed but an empty sound to both of these ambitious rebels. The other accomplice, whose name was Loosan-Dchaltzan, and whose rank was that of Lama, or Kalmuck pontiff, was a person of far more distinguished pretensions; he had something of the same gloomy and terrific pride which marked the character of Zebek himself, manifesting also the same energy, accompanied by the same unfaltering cruelty, and a natural facility of dissimulation even more profound. It was by this man that the other question was

settled, as to the time for giving effect to their designs. His own pontifical character had suggested to him that, in order to strengthen their influence with the vast mob of simple-minded men whom they were to lead into a howling wilderness, after persuading them to lay desolate their own ancient hearths, it was indispensable that they should be able, in cases of extremity, to plead the express sanction of God for their entire enterprise. This could only be done by addressing themselves to the great head of their religion, the Dalai-Lama of Tibet. Him they easily persuaded to countenance their schemes: and an oracle was delivered solemnly at Tibet, to the effect that no ultimate prosperity would attend this great Exodus unless it were pursued through the years of the *tiger* and the *hare*. Now, the Kalmuck custom is to distinguish their years by attaching to each a denomination taken from one of twelve animals, the exact order of succession being absolutely fixed, so that the cycle revolves of course through a period of a dozen years. Consequently, if the approaching year of the *tiger* were suffered to escape them, in that case the expedition must be delayed for twelve years more, within which period, even were no other unfavourable changes to arise, it was pretty well foreseen that the Russian Government would take the most effectual means for bridling their vagrant propensities by a ring-fence of forts or military posts; to say nothing of the still readier plan for securing their fidelity (a plan already talked of in all quarters) by exacting a large body of hostages selected from the families of the most influential nobles. On these cogent considerations, it was solemnly determined that this terrific experiment should be made in the next year of the *tiger*, which happened to fall upon the Christian year 1771. With respect to the month, there was, unhappily for the

Kalmucks, even less latitude allowed to their choice than with respect to the year. It was absolutely necessary, or it was thought so, that the different divisions of the nation which pastured their flocks on both banks of the Wolga should have the means of effecting an instantaneous junction; because the danger of being intercepted by flying columns of the imperial armies was precisely the greatest at the outset. Now, from the want of bridges, or sufficient river craft for transporting so vast a body of men, the sole means which could be depended upon (especially where so many women, children, and camels were concerned) was *ice:* and this, in a state of sufficient firmness, could not be absolutely counted upon before the month of January. Hence it happened that this astonishing Exodus of a whole nation, before so much as a whisper of the design had begun to circulate amongst those whom it most interested, before it was even suspected that any man's wishes pointed in that direction, had been definitively appointed for January of the year 1771. And almost up to the Christmas of 1770 the poor simple Kalmuck herdsmen and their families were going nightly to their peaceful beds, without even dreaming that the *fiat* had already gone forth from their rulers which consigned those quiet abodes, together with the peace and comfort which reigned within them, to a withering desolation, now close at hand.

8. Meantime war raged on a great scale between Russia and the Sultan; and, until the time arrived for throwing off their vassalage, it was necessary that Oubacha should contribute his usual contingent of martial aid. Nay, it had unfortunately become prudent that he should contribute much more than his usual aid. Human experience gives ample evidence that in some mysterious and unaccountable way no great design is

ever agitated, no matter how few or how faithful may be the participators, but that some presentiment—some dim misgiving—is kindled amongst those whom it is chiefly important to blind. And, however it might have happened, certain it is that already, when as yet no syllable of the conspiracy had been breathed to any man whose very existence was not staked upon its concealment, nevertheless, some vague and uneasy jealousy had arisen in the Russian Cabinet as to the future schemes of the Kalmuck Khan: and very probable it is that, but for the war then raging, and the consequent prudence of conciliating a very important vassal, or, at least, of abstaining from what would powerfully alienate him, even at that moment such measures would have been adopted as must for ever have intercepted the Kalmuck schemes. Slight as were the jealousies of the Imperial Court, they had not escaped the Machiavelian eyes of Zebek and the Lama. And under their guidance Oubacha, bending to the circumstances of the moment, and meeting the jealousy of the Russian Court with a policy corresponding to their own, strove by unusual zeal to efface the Czarina's unfavourable impressions. He enlarged the scale of his contributions, and *that* so prodigiously that he absolutely carried to head-quarters a force of 35,000 cavalry fully equipped: some go further, and rate the amount beyond 40,000; but the smaller estimate is, at all events, *within* the truth.

9. With this magnificent array of cavalry, heavy as well as light, the Khan went into the field under great expectations; and these he more than realised. Having the good fortune to be concerned with so ill-organised and disorderly a description of force as that which at all times composed the bulk of a Turkish army, he carried victory along with his banners; gained many partial successes; and at last, in a pitched battle, over-

threw the Turkish force opposed to him with a loss of 5000 men left upon the field.

10. These splendid achievements seemed likely to operate in various ways against the impending revolt. Oubacha had now a strong motive, in the martial glory acquired, for continuing his connection with the empire in whose service he had won it, and by whom only it could be fully appreciated. He was now a great marshal of a great empire, one of the Paladins around the imperial throne; in China he would be nobody, or (worse than that) a mendicant alien, prostrate at the feet, and soliciting the precarious alms, of a prince with whom he had no connection. Besides, it might reasonably be expected that the Czarina, grateful for the really efficient aid given by the Tartar prince, would confer upon him such eminent rewards as might be sufficient to anchor his hopes upon Russia, and to wean him from every possible seduction. These were the obvious suggestions of prudence and good sense to every man who stood neutral in the case. But they were disappointed. The Czarina knew her obligations to the Khan, but she did not acknowledge them. Wherefore? That is a mystery, perhaps never to be explained. So it was, however. The Khan went unhonoured; no *ukase* ever proclaimed his merits; and perhaps, had he even been abundantly recompensed by Russia, there were others who would have defeated these tendencies to reconciliation. Erempel, Zebek, and Loosang the Lama, were pledged life-deep to prevent any accommodation; and their efforts were unfortunately seconded by those of their deadliest enemies. In the Russian Court there were at that time some great nobles pre-occupied with feelings of hatred and blind malice towards the Kalmucks, quite as strong as any which the Kalmucks could harbour towards Russia, and not, perhaps, so well-founded. Just as much as the

Kalmucks hated the Russian yoke, their galling assumption of authority, the marked air of disdain, as towards a nation of ugly, stupid, and filthy barbarians, which too generally marked the Russian bearing and language, but, above all, the insolent contempt, or even outrages, which the Russian governors or great military commandants tolerated in their followers towards the barbarous religion and superstitious mummeries of the Kalmuck priesthood—precisely in that extent did the ferocity of the Russian resentment, and their wrath at seeing the trampled worm turn or attempt a feeble retaliation, re-act upon the unfortunate Kalmucks. At this crisis, it is probable that envy and wounded pride, upon witnessing the splendid victories of Oubacha and Momotbacha over the Turks and Bashkirs, contributed strength to the Russian irritation. And it must have been through the intrigues of those nobles about her person who chiefly smarted under these feelings that the Czarina could ever have lent herself to the unwise and ungrateful policy pursued at this critical period towards the Kalmuck Khan. That Czarina was no longer Elizabeth Petrowna; it was Catherine II.—a princess who did not often err so injuriously (injuriously for herself as much as for others) in the measures of her government. She had soon ample reason for repenting of her false policy. Meantime, how much it must have co-operated with the other motives previously acting upon Oubacha in sustaining his determination to revolt, and how powerfully it must have assisted the efforts of all the Tartar chieftains in preparing the minds of their people to feel the necessity of this difficult enterprise, by arming their pride and their suspicions against the Russian Government, through the keenness of their sympathy with the wrongs of their insulted prince, may be readily imagined. It is a fact, and it has been confessed by candid Russians

themselves, when treating of this great dismemberment, that the conduct of the Russian Cabinet throughout the period of suspense and during the crisis of hesitation in the Kalmuck Council was exactly such as was most desirable for the purposes of the conspirators; it was such, in fact, as to set the seal to all their machinations, by supplying distinct evidences and official vouchers for what could otherwise have been, at the most, matters of doubtful suspicion and indirect presumption.

11. Nevertheless, in the face of all these arguments, and even allowing their weight so far as not at all to deny the injustice or the impolicy of the imperial ministers, it is contended by many persons who have reviewed the affair with a command of all the documents bearing on the case, more especially the letters or minutes of council subsequently discovered in the handwriting of Zebek-Dorchi, and the important evidence of the Russian captive Weseloff, who was carried off by the Kalmucks in their flight, that beyond all doubt Oubacha was powerless for any purpose of impeding or even of delaying the revolt. He himself, indeed, was under religious obligations of the most terrific solemnity never to flinch from the enterprise, or even to slacken in his zeal: for Zebek-Dorchi, distrusting the firmness of his resolution under any unusual pressure of alarm or difficulty, had, in the very earliest stage of the conspiracy, availed himself of the Khan's well-known superstition to engage him, by means of previous concert with the priests and their head the Lama, in some dark and mysterious rites of consecration, terminating in oaths under such terrific sanctions as no Kalmuck would have courage to violate. As far, therefore, as regarded the personal share of the Khan in what was to come, Zebek was entirely at his ease; he knew him to be so deeply pledged by religious terrors to the prosecution of the conspiracy, that no hon-

ours within the Czarina's gift could have possibly shaken his adhesion: and then, as to threats from the same quarter, he knew him to be sealed against those fears by others of a gloomier character, and better adapted to his peculiar temperament. For Oubacha was a brave man as respected all bodily enemies or the dangers of human warfare, but was as sensitive and as timid as the most superstitious of old women in facing the frowns of a priest, or under the vague anticipations of ghostly retributions. But, had it been otherwise, and had there been any reason to apprehend an unsteady demeanour on the part of this prince at the approach of the critical moment, such were the changes already effected in the state of their domestic politics amongst the Tartars, by the undermining arts of Zebek-Dorchi and his ally the Lama, that very little importance would have attached to that doubt. All power was now effectually lodged in the hands of Zebek-Dorchi. He was the true and absolute wielder of the Kalmuck sceptre; all measures of importance were submitted to his discretion; and nothing was finally resolved but under his dictation. This result he had brought about, in a year or two, by means sufficiently simple: first of all, by availing himself of the prejudice in his favour, so largely diffused amongst the lowest of the Kalmucks, that his own title to the throne, in quality of great-grandson in a direct line from Ajouka, the most illustrious of all the Kalmuck Khans, stood upon a better basis than that of Oubacha, who derived from a collateral branch; secondly, with respect to that sole advantage which Oubacha possessed above himself in the ratification of his title, by improving this difference between their situations to the disadvantage of his competitor, as one who had not scrupled to accept that triumph from an alien power at the price of his independence which he himself (as he would have it

understood) disdained to court; thirdly, by his own talents and address, coupled with the ferocious energy of his moral character; fourthly—and perhaps in an equal degree—by the criminal facility and good-nature of Oubacha; finally (which is remarkable enough, as illustrating the character of the man), by that very new modelling of the Sarga or Privy Council which he had used as a principal topic of abuse and malicious insinuation against the Russian Government, whilst, in reality, he first had suggested the alteration to the Empress, and he chiefly appropriated the political advantages which it was fitted to yield. For, as he was himself appointed the chief of the Sargatchi, and as the pensions to the inferior Sargatchi passed through his hands, whilst in effect they owed their appointments to his nomination, it may be easily supposed that, whatever power existed in the state capable of controlling the Khan being held by the Sarga under its new organisation, and this body being completely under his influence, the final result was to throw all the functions of the state, whether nominally in the prince or in the council, substantially into the hands of this one man; whilst, at the same time, from the strict league which he maintained with the Lama, all the thunders of the spiritual power were always ready to come in aid of the magistrate, or to supply his incapacity in cases which he could not reach.

12. But the time was now rapidly approaching for the mighty experiment. The day was drawing near on which the signal was to be given for raising the standard of revolt, and by a combined movement on both sides of the Wolga for spreading the smoke of one vast conflagration, that should wrap in a common blaze their own huts and the stately cities of their enemies, over the breadth and length of those great provinces in which their flocks were dispersed. The year of the *tiger* was now

within one little month of its commencement; the fifth morning of that year was fixed for the fatal day when the fortunes and happiness of a whole nation were to be put upon the hazard of a dicer's throw; and as yet that nation was in profound ignorance of the whole plan. The Khan, such was the kindness of his nature, could not bring himself to make the revelation so urgently required. It was clear, however, that this could not be delayed; and Zebek-Dorchi took the task willingly upon himself. But where or how should this notification be made, so as to exclude Russian hearers? After some deliberation, the following plan was adopted:—Couriers, it was contrived, should arrive in furious haste, one upon the heels of another, reporting a sudden inroad of the Kirghises and Bashkirs upon the Kalmuck lands, at a point distant about 120 miles. Thither all the Kalmuck families, according to immemorial custom, were required to send a separate representative; and there accordingly, within three days, all appeared. The distance, the solitary ground appointed for the rendezvous, the rapidity of the march, all tended to make it almost certain that no Russian could be present. Zebek-Dorchi then came forward. He did not waste many words upon rhetoric. He unfurled an immense sheet of parchment, visible from the uttermost distance at which any of this vast crowd could stand; the total number amounted to 80,000; all saw, and many heard. They were told of the oppressions of Russia; of her pride and haughty disdain evidenced towards them by a thousand acts; of her contempt for their religion; of her determination to reduce them to absolute slavery; of the preliminary measures she had already taken by erecting forts upon many of the great rivers in their neighbourhood; of the ulterior intentions she thus announced to circumscribe their pastoral lands, until they would all be obliged to renounce their

flocks, and to collect in towns like Sarepta, there to pursue mechanical and servile trades of shoemaker, tailor, and weaver, such as the free-born Tartar had always disdained. "Then again," said the subtle prince, "she increases her military levies upon our population every year; we pour out our blood as young men in her defence, or more often in support of her insolent aggressions; and as old men we reap nothing from our sufferings, nor benefit by our survivorship where so many are sacrificed." At this point of his harangue, Zebek produced several papers (forged, as it is generally believed, by himself and the Lama), containing projects of the Russian court for a general transfer of the eldest sons, taken *en masse* from the greatest Kalmuck families, to the imperial court. "Now let this be once accomplished," he argued, "and there is an end of all useful resistance from that day forwards. Petitions we might make, or even remonstrances; as men of words we might play a bold part; but for deeds, for that sort of language by which our ancestors were used to speak —holding us by such a chain, Russia would make a jest of our wishes, knowing full well that we should not dare to make any effectual movement."

13. Having thus sufficiently roused the angry passions of his vast audience, and having alarmed their fears by this pretended scheme against their first-born (an artifice which was indispensable to his purpose, because it met beforehand *every* form of amendment to his proposal coming from the more moderate nobles, who would not otherwise have failed to insist upon trying the effect of bold addresses to the Empress before resorting to any desperate extremity), Zebek-Dorchi opened his scheme of revolt, and, if so, of instant revolt; since any preparations reported at St. Petersburg would be a signal for the armies of Russia to cross into such positions from

all parts of Asia as would effectually intercept their march. It is remarkable, however, that, with all his audacity and his reliance upon the momentary excitement of the Kalmucks, the subtle prince did not venture, at this stage of his seduction, to make so startling a proposal as that of a flight to China. All that he held out for the present was a rapid march to the Temba or some other great river, which they were to cross, and take up a strong position on the farther bank, from which, as from a post of conscious security, they could hold a bolder language to the Czarina, and one which would have a better chance of winning a favourable audience.

14. These things, in the irritated condition of the simple Tartars, passed by acclamation; and all returned homewards to push forward with the most furious speed the preparations for their awful undertaking. Rapid and energetic these of necessity were; and in that degree they became noticeable and manifest to the Russians who happened to be intermingled with the different hordes, either on commercial errands, or as agents officially from the Russian Government, some in a financial, others in a diplomatic character.

15. Amongst these last (indeed at the head of them) was a Russian of some distinction, by name Kichinskoi, a man memorable for his vanity, and memorable also as one of the many victims to the Tartar revolution. This Kichinskoi had been sent by the Empress as her envoy to overlook the conduct of the Kalmucks; he was styled the Grand Pristaw, or Great Commissioner, and was universally known amongst the Tartar tribes by this title. His mixed character of ambassador and of political *surveillant*, combined with the dependent state of the Kalmucks, gave him a real weight in the Tartar councils, and might have given him a far greater, had

not his outrageous self-conceit, and his arrogant confidence in his own authority as due chiefly to his personal qualities for command, led him into such harsh displays of power, and menaces so odious to the Tartar pride, as very soon made him an object of their profoundest malice. He had publicly insulted the Khan; and, upon making a communication to him to the effect that some reports began to circulate, and even to reach the Empress, of a design in agitation to fly from the imperial dominions, he had ventured to say, "But this you dare not attempt; I laugh at such rumours; yes, Khan, I laugh at them to the Empress; for you are a chained bear, and that you know." The Khan turned away on his heel with marked disdain; and the Pristaw, foaming at the mouth, continued to utter, amongst those of the Khan's attendants who staid behind to catch his real sentiments in a moment of unguarded passion, all that the blindest frenzy of rage could suggest to the most presumptuous of fools. It was now ascertained that suspicions *had* arisen; but at the same time it was ascertained that the Pristaw spoke no more than the truth in representing himself to have discredited these suspicions. The fact was that the mere infatuation of vanity made him believe that nothing could go on undetected by his all-piercing sagacity, and that no rebellion could prosper when rebuked by his commanding presence. The Tartars, therefore, pursued their preparations, confiding in the obstinate blindness of the Grand Pristaw as in their perfect safeguard; and such it proved—to his own ruin as well as that of myriads besides.

16. Christmas arrived; and, a little before that time, courier upon courier came dropping in, one upon the very heels of another, to St. Petersburg, assuring the Czarina that beyond all doubt the Kalmucks were in the very crisis of departure. These despatches came from

the Governor of Astrachan, and copies were instantly forwarded to Kichinskoi. Now, it happened that between this governor—a Russian named Beketoff—and the Pristaw had been an ancient feud. The very name of Beketoff inflamed his resentment; and no sooner did he see that hated name attached to the despatch than he felt himself confirmed in his former views with tenfold bigotry, and wrote instantly, in terms of the most pointed ridicule, against the new alarmist, pledging his own head upon the visionariness of his alarms. Beketoff, however, was not to be put down by a few hard words, or by ridicule: he persisted in his statements; the Russian ministry were confounded by the obstinacy of the disputants; and some were beginning even to treat the Governor of Astrachan as a bore, and as the dupe of his own nervous terrors, when the memorable day arrived, the fatal 5th of January, which for ever terminated the dispute, and put a seal upon the earthly hopes and fortunes of unnumbered myriads. The Governor of Astrachan was the first to hear the news. Stung by the mixed furies of jealousy, of triumphant vengeance, and of anxious ambition, he sprang into his sledge, and, at the rate of 300 miles a-day, pursued his route to St. Petersburg—rushed into the Imperial presence—announced the total realisation of his worst predictions—and, upon the confirmation of this intelligence by subsequent despatches from many different posts on the Wolga, he received an imperial commission to seize the person of his deluded enemy, and to keep him in strict captivity. These orders were eagerly fulfilled; and the unfortunate Kichinskoi soon afterwards expired of grief and mortification in the gloomy solitude of a dungeon—a victim to his own immeasurable vanity, and the blinding self-delusions of a presumption that refused all warning.

17. The Governor of Astrachan had been but too

faithful a prophet. Perhaps even *he* was surprised at the suddenness with which the verification followed his reports. Precisely on the 5th of January, the day so solemnly appointed under religious sanctions by the Lama, the Kalmucks on the east bank of the Wolga were seen at the earliest dawn of day assembling by troops and squadrons, and in the tumultuous movement of some great morning of battle. Tens of thousands continued moving off the ground at every half-hour's interval. Women and children, to the amount of two hundred thousand and upwards, were placed upon waggons, or upon camels, and drew off by masses of twenty thousand at once—placed under suitable escorts, and continually swelled in numbers by other outlying bodies of the horde, who kept falling in at various distances upon the first and second day's march. From sixty to eighty thousand of those who were the best mounted staid behind the rest of the tribes, with purposes of devastation and plunder more violent than prudence justified, or the amiable character of the Khan could be supposed to approve. But in this, as in other instances, he was completely overruled by the malignant counsels of Zebek-Dorchi. The first tempest of the desolating fury of the Tartars discharged itself upon their own habitations. But this, as cutting off all infirm looking backward from the hardships of their march, had been thought so necessary a measure by all the chieftains, that even Oubacha himself was the first to authorise the act by his own example. He seized a torch previously prepared with materials the most durable as well as combustible, and steadily applied it to the timbers of his own palace. Nothing was saved from the general wreck except the portable part of the domestic utensils, and that part of the wood-work which could be applied to the manufacture of the long Tartar lances. This chapter in their

memorable day's work being finished, and the whole of their villages throughout a district of ten thousand square miles in one simultaneous blaze, the Tartars waited for further orders.

18. These, it was intended, should have taken a character of valedictory vengeance, and thus have left behind to the Czarina a dreadful commentary upon the main motives of their flight. It was the purpose of Zebek-Dorchi that all the Russian towns, churches, and buildings of every description, should be given up to pillage and destruction, and such treatment applied to the defenceless inhabitants as might naturally be expected from a fierce people already infuriated by the spectacle of their own outrages, and by the bloody retaliations which they must necessarily have provoked. This part of the tragedy, however, was happily intercepted by a providential disappointment at the very crisis of departure. It has been mentioned already that the motive for selecting the depth of winter as the season for flight (which otherwise was obviously the very worst possible) had been the impossibility of effecting a junction sufficiently rapid with the tribes on the west of the Wolga, in the absence of bridges, unless by a natural bridge of ice. For this one advantage, the Kalmuck leaders had consented to aggravate by a thousandfold the calamities inevitable to a rapid flight over boundless tracts of country, with women, children, and herds of cattle—for this one single advantage; and yet, after all, it was lost. The reason never has been explained satisfactorily, but the fact was such. Some have said that the signals were not properly concerted for marking the moment of absolute departure—that is, for signifying whether the settled intention of the Eastern Kalmucks might not have been suddenly interrupted by adverse intelligence. Others have supposed that the ice might

not be equally strong on both sides of the river, and might even be generally insecure for the treading of heavy and heavily-laden animals such as camels. But the prevailing notion is that some accidental movements on the 3d and 4th of January of Russian troops in the neighbourhood of the Western Kalmucks, though really having no reference to them or their plans, had been construed into certain signs that all was discovered; and that the prudence of the Western chieftains, who, from situation, had never been exposed to those intrigues by which Zebek-Dorchi had practised upon the pride of the Eastern tribes, now stepped in to save their people from ruin. Be the cause what it might, it is certain that the Western Kalmucks were in some way prevented from forming the intended junction with their brethren of the opposite bank; and the result was that at least one hundred thousand of these Tartars were left behind in Russia. This accident it was which saved their Russian neighbours universally from the desolation which else awaited them. One general massacre and conflagration would assuredly have surprised them, to the utter extermination of their property, their houses, and themselves, had it not been for this disappointment. But the Eastern chieftains did not dare to put to hazard the safety of their brethren under the first impulse of the Czarina's vengeance for so dreadful a tragedy; for, as they were well aware of too many circumstances by which she might discover the concurrence of the Western people in the general scheme of revolt, they justly feared that she would thence infer their concurrence also in the bloody events which marked its outset.

19. Little did the Western Kalmucks guess what reasons they also had for gratitude on account of an interposition so unexpected, and which at the moment they so generally deplored. Could they but have wit-

nessed the thousandth part of the sufferings which overtook their Eastern brethren in the first month of their sad flight, they would have blessed Heaven for their own narrow escape; and yet these sufferings of the first month were but a prelude or foretaste comparatively slight of those which afterwards succeeded.

20. For now began to unroll the most awful series of calamities, and the most extensive, which is anywhere recorded to have visited the sons and daughters of men. It is possible that the sudden inroads of destroying nations, such as the Huns, or the Avars, or the Mongol Tartars, may have inflicted misery as extensive; but there the misery and the desolation would be sudden, like the flight of volleying lightning. Those who were spared at first would generally be spared to the end; those who perished at all would perish at once. It is possible that the French retreat from Moscow may have made some nearer approach to this calamity in duration, though still a feeble and miniature approach; for the French sufferings did not commence in good earnest until about one month from the time of leaving Moscow; and though it is true that afterwards the vials of wrath were emptied upon the devoted army for six or seven weeks in succession, yet what is that to this Kalmuck tragedy, which lasted for more than as many months? But the main feature of horror by which the Tartar march was distinguished from the French lies in the accompaniment of women[1] and children. There were both, it is true, with the French army, but not so

[1] Singular it is, and not generally known, that Grecian women accompanied the *anabasis* of the younger Cyrus and the subsequent Retreat of the Ten Thousand. Xenophon affirms that there were "many" women in the Greek army—πολλαὶ ἦσαν ἑταῖραι ἐν τῷ στρατεύματι; and in a late stage of that trying expedition it is evident that women were amongst the survivors.

many as to bear any marked proportion to the total numbers concerned. The French, in short, were merely an army—a host of professional destroyers, whose regular trade was bloodshed, and whose regular element was danger and suffering. But the Tartars were a nation carrying along with them more than two hundred and fifty thousand women and children, utterly unequal, for the most part, to any contest with the calamities before them. The Children of Israel were in the same circumstances as to the accompaniment of their families; but they were released from the pursuit of their enemies in a very early stage of their flight; and their subsequent residence in the Desert was not a march, but a continued halt, and under a continued interposition of Heaven for their comfortable support. Earthquakes, again, however comprehensive in their ravages, are shocks of a moment's duration. A much nearer approach made to the wide range and the long duration of the Kalmuck tragedy may have been in a pestilence such as that which visited Athens in the Peloponnesian War, or London in the reign of Charles II. There also the martyrs were counted by myriads, and the period of the desolation was counted by months. But, after all, the total amount of destruction was on a smaller scale; and there was this feature of alleviation to the *conscious* pressure of the calamity—that the misery was withdrawn from public notice into private chambers and hospitals. The siege of Jerusalem by Vespasian and his son, taken in its entire circumstances, comes nearest of all—for breadth and depth of suffering, for duration, for the exasperation of the suffering from without by internal feuds, and, finally, for that last most appalling expression of the furnace-heat of the anguish in its power to extinguish the natural affections even of maternal love. But, after all, each case had circumstances of romantic

misery peculiar to itself—circumstances without precedent, and (wherever human nature is ennobled by Christianity), it may be confidently hoped, never to be repeated.

21. The first point to be reached, before any hope of repose could be encouraged, was the river Jaik. This was not above 300 miles from the main point of departure on the Wolga; and if the march thither was to be a forced one, and a severe one, it was alleged, on the other hand, that the suffering would be the more brief and transient; one summary exertion, not to be repeated, and all was achieved. Forced the march was, and severe beyond example: there the forewarning proved correct; but the promised rest proved a mere phantom of the wilderness—a visionary rainbow, which fled before their hope-sick eyes, across these interminable solitudes, for seven months of hardship and calamity, without a pause. These sufferings, by their very nature, and the circumstances under which they arose, were (like the scenery of the steppes) somewhat monotonous in their colouring and external features; what variety, however, there was will be most naturally exhibited by tracing historically the successive stages of the general misery, exactly as it unfolded itself under the double agency of weakness still increasing from within, and hostile pressure from without. Viewed in this manner, under the real order of development, it is remarkable that these sufferings of the Tartars, though under the moulding hands of accident, arrange themselves almost with a scenical propriety. They seem combined as with the skill of an artist; the intensity of the misery advancing regularly with the advances of the march, and the stages of the calamity corresponding to the stages of the route; so that, upon raising the curtain which veils the great catastrophe, we behold one vast climax of anguish, towering upwards by

regular gradations, as if constructed artificially for picturesque effect—a result which might not have been surprising had it been reasonable to anticipate the same rate of speed, and even an accelerated rate, as prevailing through the later stages of the expedition. But it seemed, on the contrary, most reasonable to calculate upon a continual decrement in the rate of motion according to the increasing distance from the headquarters of the pursuing enemy. This calculation, however, was defeated by the extraordinary circumstance that the Russian armies did not begin to close in very fiercely upon the Kalmucks until after they had accomplished a distance of full 2,000 miles: 1,000 miles farther on the assaults became even more tumultuous and murderous: and already the great shadows of the Chinese Wall were dimly descried when the frenzy and *acharnement* of the pursuers, and the bloody desperation of the miserable fugitives, had reached its uttermost extremity. Let us briefly rehearse the main stages of the misery, and trace the ascending steps of the tragedy, according to the great divisions of the route marked out by the central rivers of Asia.

22. The first stage, we have already said, was from the Wolga to the Jaik; the distance about 300 miles; the time allowed seven days. For the first week, therefore, the rate of marching averaged about 43 English miles a-day. The weather was cold, but bracing; and, at a more moderate pace, this part of the journey might have been accomplished without much distress by a people as hardy as the Kalmucks: as it was, the cattle suffered greatly from over-driving; milk began to fail even for the children; the sheep perished by wholesale; and the children themselves were saved only by the innumerable camels.

23. The Cossacks who dwelt upon the banks of the Jaik were the first among the subjects of Russia to

come into collision with the Kalmucks. Great was their surprise at the suddenness of the irruption, and great also their consternation; for, according to their settled custom, by far the greater part of their number was absent during the winter months at the fisheries upon the Caspian. Some who were liable to surprise at the most exposed points fled in crowds to the fortress of Koulagina, which was immediately invested and summoned by Oubacha. He had, however, in his train only a few light pieces of artillery; and the Russian commandant at Koulagina, being aware of the hurried circumstances in which the Khan was placed, and that he stood upon the very edge, as it were, of a renewed flight, felt encouraged by these considerations to a more obstinate resistance than might else have been advisable, with an enemy so little disposed to observe the usages of civilised warfare. The period of his anxiety was not long: on the fifth day of the siege he descried from the walls a succession of Tartar couriers, mounted upon fleet Bactrian camels, crossing the vast plains around the fortress at a furious pace, and riding into the Kalmuck encampment at various points. Great agitation appeared immediately to follow: orders were soon after despatched in all directions; and it became speedily known that upon a distant flank of the Kalmuck movement a bloody and exterminating battle had been fought the day before, in which one entire tribe of the Khan's dependants, numbering not less than 9,000 fighting men, had perished to the last man. This was the *ouloss*, or clan, called Feka-Zechorr, between whom and the Cossacks there was a feud of ancient standing. In selecting, therefore, the points of attack, on occasion of the present hasty inroad, the Cossack chiefs were naturally eager so to direct their efforts as to combine with the service of the Empress some gratification to their own party hatreds: more espe-

cially as the present was likely to be their final opportunity for revenge, if the Kalmuck evasion should prosper. Having, therefore, concentrated as large a body of Cossack cavalry as circumstances allowed, they attacked the hostile *ouloss* with a precipitation which denied to it all means for communicating with Oubacha; for the necessity of commanding an ample range of pasturage, to meet the necessities of their vast flocks and herds, had separated this *ouloss* from the Khan's head-quarters by an interval of 80 miles; and thus it was, and not from oversight, that it came to be thrown entirely upon its own resources. These had proved insufficient: retreat, from the exhausted state of their horses and camels, no less than from the prodigious encumbrances of their live stock, was absolutely out of the question: quarter was disdained on the one side, and would not have been granted on the other: and thus it had happened that the setting sun of that one day (the thirteenth from the first opening of the revolt) threw his parting rays upon the final agonies of an ancient *ouloss*, stretched upon a bloody field, who on that day's dawning had styled themselves an independent nation.

24. Universal consternation was diffused through the wide borders of the Khan's encampment by this disastrous intelligence; not so much on account of the numbers slain, or the total extinction of a powerful ally, as because the position of the Cossack force was likely to put to hazard the future advances of the Kalmucks, or at least to retard and hold them in check until the heavier columns of the Russian army should arrive upon their flanks. The siege of Koulagina was instantly raised; and that signal, so fatal to the happiness of the women and their children, once again resounded through the tents—the signal for flight, and this time for a flight more rapid than ever. About 150 miles ahead of their

present position, there arose a tract of hilly country, forming a sort of margin to the vast sea-like expanse of champaign savannahs, steppes, and occasionally of sandy deserts, which stretched away on each side of this margin both eastwards and westwards. Pretty nearly in the centre of this hilly range lay a narrow defile, through which passed the nearest and the most practicable route to the river Torgai (the farther bank of which river offered the next great station of security for a general halt). It was the more essential to gain this pass before the Cossacks, inasmuch as not only would the delay in forcing the pass give time to the Russian pursuing columns for combining their attacks, and for bringing up their artillery, but also because (even if all enemies in pursuit were thrown out of the question) it was held by those best acquainted with the difficult and obscure geography of these pathless steppes—that the loss of this one narrow strait amongst the hills would have the effect of throwing them (as their only alternative in a case where so wide a sweep of pasturage was required) upon a circuit of at least 500 miles extra; besides that, after all, this circuitous route would carry them to the Torgai at a point ill fitted for the passage of their heavy baggage. The defile in the hills, therefore, it was resolved to gain; and yet, unless they moved upon it with the velocity of light cavalry, there was little chance but that it would be found pre-occupied by the Cossacks. They also, it is true, had suffered greatly in the bloody action with the defeated *ouloss;* but the excitement of victory, and the intense sympathy with their unexampled triumph, had again swelled their ranks, and would probably act with the force of a vortex to draw in their simple countrymen from the Caspian. The question, therefore, of pre-occupation was reduced to a race. The Cossacks were marching upon an oblique line not above

50 miles longer than that which led to the same point from the Kalmuck head-quarters before Koulagina; and therefore, without the most furious haste on the part of the Kalmucks, there was not a chance for them, burdened and "trashed"[1] as they were, to anticipate so agile a light cavalry as the Cossacks in seizing this important pass.

25. Dreadful were the feelings of the poor women on hearing this exposition of the case. For they easily understood that too capital an interest (the *summa rerum*) was now at stake, to allow of any regard to minor interests, or what would be considered such in their present circumstances. The dreadful week already passed—their inauguration in misery—was yet fresh in their remembrance. The scars of suffering were impressed not only upon their memories, but upon their very persons and the persons of their children. And they knew that, where no speed had much chance of meeting the cravings of their chieftains, no test would be accepted, short of absolute exhaustion, that as much had been accomplished as could have been accomplished. Weseloff, the Russian captive, has recorded the silent wretchedness with which the women and elder boys assisted in drawing the tent-ropes. On the 5th of January all had been animation, and the joyousness of indefinite expectation; now, on the contrary, a brief but bitter experience had taught them to take an amended calculation of what it was that lay before them.

26. One whole day and far into the succeeding night had the renewed flight continued; the sufferings had been

[1] "*Trashed*":—This is an expressive word used by Beaumont and Fletcher in their "Bonduca," &c., to describe the case of a person retarded and embarrassed in flight, or in pursuit, by some encumbrance, whether thing or person, too valuable to be left behind.

greater than before; for the cold had been more intense; and many perished out of the living creatures through every class, except only the camels—whose powers of endurance seemed equally adapted to cold and to heat. The second morning, however, brought an alleviation to the distress. Snow had begun to fall; and, though not deep at present, it was easily foreseen that it soon would be so; and that, as a halt would in that case become unavoidable, no plan could be better than that of staying where they were; especially as the same cause would check the advance of the Cossacks. Here then was the last interval of comfort which gleamed upon the unhappy nation during their whole migration. For ten days the snow continued to fall with little intermission. At the end of that time keen, bright, frosty weather succeeded; the drifting had ceased; in three days the smooth expanse became firm enough to support the treading of the camels; and the flight was recommenced. But during the halt much domestic comfort had been enjoyed, and for the last time universal plenty. The cows and oxen had perished in such vast numbers on the previous marches, that an order was now issued to turn what remained to account by slaughtering the whole, and salting whatever part should be found to exceed the immediate consumption. This measure led to a scene of general banqueting and even of festivity amongst all who were not incapacitated for joyous emotions by distress of mind, by grief for the unhappy experience of the few last days, and by anxiety for the too gloomy future. Seventy thousand persons of all ages had already perished, exclusively of the many thousand allies who had been cut down by the Cossack sabre. And the losses in reversion were likely to be many more. For rumours began now to arrive from all quarters, by the mounted couriers whom the Khan had despatched to the rear and

to each flank as well as in advance, that large masses of the imperial troops were converging from all parts of Central Asia to the fords of the River Torgai, as the most convenient point for intercepting the flying tribes; and it was by this time well known that a powerful division was close in their rear, and was retarded only by the numerous artillery which had been judged necessary to support their operations. New motives were thus daily arising for quickening the motions of the wretched Kalmucks, and for exhausting those who were already but too much exhausted.

27. It was not until the 2d day of February that the Khan's advanced guard came in sight of Ouchim, the defile among the hills of Mougaldchares, in which they anticipated so bloody an opposition from the Cossacks. A pretty large body of these light cavalry had, in fact, pre-occupied the pass for some hours; but the Khan, having two great advantages—namely, a strong body of infantry, who had been conveyed by sections of five on about 200 camels, and some pieces of light artillery which he had not yet been forced to abandon —soon began to make a serious impression upon this unsupported detachment; and they would probably at any rate have retired; but at the very moment when they were making some dispositions in that view Zebek-Dorchi appeared upon the rear with a body of trained riflemen, who had distinguished themselves in the war with Turkey. These men had contrived to crawl unobserved over the cliffs which skirted the ravine, availing themselves of the dry beds of the summer torrents, and other inequalities of the ground, to conceal their movement. Disorder and trepidation ensued instantly in the Cossack files; the Khan, who had been waiting with the *élite* of his heavy cavalry, charged furiously upon them; total overthrow followed to the Cossacks, and a

slaughter such as in some measure avenged the recent bloody extermination of their allies, the ancient *ouloss* of Feka-Zechorr. The slight horses of the Cossacks were unable to support the weight of heavy Polish dragoons and a body of trained *cameleers* (that is, cuirassiers mounted on camels); hardy they were, but not strong, nor a match for their antagonists in weight; and their extraordinary efforts through the last few days to gain their present position had greatly diminished their powers for effecting an escape. Very few, in fact, *did* escape; and the bloody day at Ouchim became as memorable amongst the Cossacks as that which, about twenty days before, had signalised the complete annihilation of the Feka-Zechorr.[1]

28. The road was now open to the river Irgitch, and as yet even far beyond it to the Torgau; but how long this state of things would continue was every day more doubtful. Certain intelligence was now received that a large Russian army, well appointed in every arm, was advancing upon the Torgau, under the command of General Traubenberg. This officer was to be joined on his route by ten thousand Bashkirs, and pretty nearly the same amount of Kirghises—both hereditary enemies

[1] There was another *ouloss* equally strong with that of Feka-Zechorr, viz., that of Erketunn, under the government of Assarcho and Machi, whom some obligations of treaty or other hidden motives drew into the general conspiracy of revolt. But fortunately the two chieftains found means to assure the Governor of Astrachan, on the first outbreak of the insurrection, that their real wishes were for maintaining the old connection with Russia. The Cossacks, therefore, to whom the pursuit was intrusted, had instructions to act cautiously and according to circumstances on coming up with them. The result was, through the prudent management of Assarcho, that the clan, without compromising their pride or independence, made such moderate submissions as satisfied the Cossacks; and eventually both chiefs and people received from the Czarina the rewards and honours of exemplary fidelity.

of the Kalmucks, both exasperated to a point of madness by the bloody trophies which Oubacha and Momotbacha had, in late years, won from such of their compatriots as served under the Sultan. The Czarina's yoke these wild nations bore with submissive patience, but not the hands by which it had been imposed; and, accordingly, catching with eagerness at the present occasion offered to their vengeance, they sent an assurance to the Czarina of their perfect obedience to her commands, and at the same time a message significantly declaring in what spirit they meant to execute them, viz., "that they would not trouble her Majesty with prisoners."

29. Here then arose, as before with the Cossacks, a race for the Kalmucks with the regular armies of Russia, and concurrently with nations as fierce and semi-humanised as themselves, besides that they had been stung into threefold activity by the furies of mortified pride and military abasement, under the eyes of the Turkish Sultan. The forces, and more especially the artillery, of Russia were far too overwhelming to bear the thought of a regular opposition in pitched battles, even with a less dilapidated state of their resources than they could reasonably expect at the period of their arrival on the Torgau. In their speed lay their only hope—in strength of foot, as before, and not in strength of arm. Onward, therefore, the Kalmucks pressed, marking the lines of their wide-extending march over the sad solitudes of the steppes by a never-ending chain of corpses. The old and the young, the sick man on his couch, the mother with her baby—all were dropping fast. Such sights as these, with the many rueful aggravations incident to the helpless condition of infancy—of disease and of female weakness abandoned to the wolves amidst a howling wilderness, continued to track their course through a space of full two thousand miles; for so much,

at the least, it was likely to prove, including the circuits to which they were often compelled by rivers or hostile tribes, from the point of starting on the Wolga, until they could reach their destined halting ground on the east bank of the Torgau. For the first seven weeks of this march their sufferings had been embittered by the excessive severity of the cold; and every night—so long as wood was to be had for fires, either from the lading of the camels, or from the desperate sacrifice of their baggage-waggons, or (as occasionally happened) from the forests which skirted the banks of the many rivers which crossed their path—no spectacle was more frequent than that of a circle, composed of men, women, and children, gathered by hundreds round a central fire, all dead and stiff by the return of the morning light. Myriads were left behind from pure exhaustion, of whom none had a chance, under the combined evils which beset them, of surviving through the next twenty-four hours. Frost, however, and snow at length ceased to persecute; the vast extent of the march at length brought them into more genial latitudes, and the unusual duration of the march was gradually bringing them into more genial seasons of the year. Two thousand miles had at last been traversed; February, March, April, were gone; the balmy month of May had opened; vernal sights and sounds came from every side to comfort the heart-weary travellers; and, at last, in the latter end of May, crossing the Torgau, they took up a position where they hoped to find liberty to repose themselves for many weeks in comfort as well as in security, and to draw such supplies from the fertile neighbourhood as might restore their shattered forces to a condition for executing, with less of wreck and ruin, the large remainder of the journey.

30. Yes; it was true that two thousand miles of wandering had been completed, but in a period of nearly

five months, and with the terrific sacrifice of at least two hundred and fifty thousand souls, to say nothing of herds and flocks past all reckoning. These had all perished: ox, cow, horse, mule, ass, sheep, or goat, not one survived—only the camels. These arid and adust creatures, looking like the mummies of some antediluvian animals, without the affections or sensibilities of flesh and blood—these only still erected their speaking eyes to the eastern heavens, and had to all appearance come out from this long tempest of trial unscathed and hardly diminished. The Khan, knowing how much he was individually answerable for the misery which had been sustained, must have wept tears even more bitter than those of Xerxes, when he threw his eyes over the myriads whom he had assembled: for the tears of Xerxes were unmingled with remorse. Whatever amends were in his power the Khan resolved to make, by sacrifices to the general good of all personal regards; and accordingly, even at this point of their advance, he once more deliberately brought under review the whole question of the revolt. The question was formally debated before the Council, whether, even at this point, they should untread their steps, and, throwing themselves upon the Czarina's mercy, return to their old allegiance. In that case, Oubacha professed himself willing to become the scapegoat for the general transgression. This, he argued, was no fantastic scheme, but even easy of accomplishment; for the unlimited and sacred power of the Khan, so well known to the Empress, made it absolutely iniquitous to attribute any separate responsibility to the people—upon the Khan rested the guilt, upon the Khan would descend the imperial vengeance. This proposal was applauded for its generosity, but was energetically opposed by Zebek-Dorchi. Were they to lose the whole journey of two thousand miles? Was their misery to

perish without fruit? True it was that they had yet reached only the half-way house; but, in that respect, the motives were evenly balanced for retreat or for advance. Either way they would have pretty nearly the same distance to traverse, but with this difference—that, forwards, their route lay through lands comparatively fertile; backwards, through a blasted wilderness, rich only in memorials of their sorrow, and hideous to Kalmuck eyes by the trophies of their calamity. Besides, though the Empress might accept an excuse for the past, would she the less forbear to suspect for the future? The Czarina's *pardon* they might obtain, but could they ever hope to recover her *confidence?* Doubtless there would now be a standing presumption against them, an immortal ground of jealousy; and a jealous government would be but another name for a harsh one. Finally, whatever motives there ever had been for the revolt surely remained unimpaired by anything that had occurred. In reality, the revolt was, after all, no revolt, but (strictly speaking) a return to their old allegiance; since, not over one hundred and fifty years ago (viz., in the year 1616), their ancestors had revolted from the Emperor of China. They had now tried both governments; and for them China was the land of promise, and Russia the house of bondage.

31. Spite, however, of all that Zebek could say or do, the yearning of the people was strongly in behalf of the Khan's proposal; the pardon of their prince, they persuaded themselves, would be readily conceded by the Empress: and there is little doubt that they would at this time have thrown themselves gladly upon the imperial mercy; when suddenly all was defeated by the arrival of two envoys from Traubenberg. This general had reached the fortress of Orsk, after a very painful march, on the 12th of April; thence he set forwards towards

Oriembourg; which he reached upon the 1st of June, having been joined on his route at various times during the month of May by the Kirghises and a corps of ten thousand Bashkirs. From Oriembourg he sent forward his official offers to the Khan, which were harsh and peremptory, holding out no specific stipulations as to pardon or impunity, and exacting unconditional submission as the preliminary price of any cessation from military operations. The personal character of Traubenberg, which was anything but energetic, and the condition of his army, disorganised in a great measure by the length and severity of the march, made it probable that, with a little time for negotiation, a more conciliatory tone would have been assumed. But, unhappily for all parties, sinister events occurred in the meantime, such as effectually put an end to every hope of the kind.

32. The two envoys sent forward by Traubenberg had reported to this officer that a distance of only ten days' march lay between his own head-quarters and those of the Khan. Upon this fact transpiring, the Kirghises, by their prince Nourali, and the Bashkirs, entreated the Russian general to advance without delay. Once having placed his cannon in position, so as to command the Kalmuck camp, the fate of the rebel Khan and his people would be in his own hands: and they would themselves form his advanced guard. Traubenberg, however (*why* has not been certainly explained), refused to march, grounding his refusal upon the condition of his army, and their absolute need of refreshment. Long and fierce was the altercation; but at length, seeing no chance of prevailing, and dreading above all other events the escape of their detested enemy, the ferocious Bashkirs went off in a body by forced marches. In six days they reached the Torgau, crossed by swimming their horses, and fell upon the Kalmucks, who were dis-

persed for many a league in search of food or provender for their camels. The first day's action was one vast succession of independent skirmishes, diffused over a field of thirty to forty miles in extent; one party often breaking up into three or four, and again (according to the accidents of the ground) three or four blending into one; flight and pursuit, rescue and total overthrow, going on simultaneously, under all varieties of form, in all quarters of the plain. The Bashkirs had found themselves obliged, by the scattered state of the Kalmucks, to split up into innumerable sections; and thus, for some hours, it had been impossible for the most practised eye to collect the general tendency of the day's fortune. Both the Khan and Zebek-Dorchi were at one moment made prisoners, and more than once in imminent danger of being cut down; but at length Zebek succeeded in rallying a strong column of infantry, which, with the support of the camel-corps on each flank, compelled the Bashkirs to retreat. Clouds, however, of these wild cavalry continued to arrive through the next two days and nights, followed or accompanied by the Kirghises. These being viewed as the advanced parties of Traubenberg's army, the Kalmuck chieftains saw no hope of safety but in flight; and in this way it happened that a retreat which had so recently been brought to a pause was resumed at the very moment when the unhappy fugitives were anticipating a deep repose without further molestation the whole summer through.

33. It seemed as though every variety of wretchedness were predestined to the Kalmucks, and as if their sufferings were incomplete unless they were rounded and matured by all that the most dreadful agencies of summer's heat could superadd to those of frost and winter. To this sequel of their story I shall immediately revert,

after first noticing a little romantic episode which occurred at this point between Oubacha and his unprincipled cousin Zebek-Dorchi.

34. There was at the time of the Kalmuck flight from the Wolga a Russian gentleman of some rank at the court of the Khan, whom, for political reasons, it was thought necessary to carry along with them as a captive. For some weeks his confinement had been very strict, and in one or two instances cruel. But, as the increasing distance was continually diminishing the chances of escape, and perhaps, also, as the misery of the guards gradually withdrew their attention from all minor interests to their own personal sufferings, the vigilance of the custody grew more and more relaxed; until at length, upon a petition to the Khan, Mr. Weseloff was formally restored to liberty; and it was understood that he might use his liberty in whatever way he chose, even for returning to Russia, if that should be his wish. Accordingly, he was making active preparations for his journey to St. Petersburg, when it occurred to Zebek-Dorchi that, not improbably, in some of the battles which were then anticipated with Traubenberg, it might happen to them to lose some prisoner of rank, in which case the Russian Weseloff would be a pledge in their hands for negotiating an exchange. Upon this plea, to his own severe affliction, the Russian was detained until the further pleasure of the Khan. The Khan's name, indeed, was used through the whole affair; but, as it seemed, with so little concurrence on his part, that, when Weseloff in a private audience humbly remonstrated upon the injustice done him, and the cruelty of thus sporting with his feelings by setting him at liberty, and, as it were, tempting him into dreams of home and restored happiness only for the purpose of blighting them, the good-natured prince disclaimed all participation in the

affair, and went so far in proving his sincerity, as even to give him permission to effect his escape; and, as a ready means of commencing it without raising suspicion, the Khan mentioned to Mr. Wesceloff that he had just then received a message from the Hetman of the Bashkirs, soliciting a private interview on the banks of the Torgan at a spot pointed out: that interview was arranged for the coming night; and Mr. Wesceloff might go in the Khan's *suite,* which on either side was not to exceed three persons. Wesceloff was a prudent man, acquainted with the world, and he read treachery in the very outline of this scheme, as stated by the Khan—treachery against the Khan's person. He mused a little, and then communicated so much of his suspicions to the Khan as might put him on his guard; but, upon further consideration, he begged leave to decline the honour of accompanying the Khan. The fact was that three Kalmucks, who had strong motives for returning to their countrymen on the west bank of the Wolga, guessing the intentions of Wesceloff, had offered to join him in his escape. These men the Khan would probably find himself obliged to countenance in their project; so that it became a point of honour with Wesceloff to conceal their intentions, and therefore to accomplish the evasion from the camp (of which the first steps only would be hazardous) without risking the notice of the Khan.

35. The district in which they were now encamped abounded through many hundred miles with wild horses of a docile and beautiful breed. Each of the four fugitives had caught from seven to ten of these spirited creatures in the course of the last few days: this raised no suspicion, for the rest of the Kalmucks had been making the same sort of provision against the coming toils of their remaining route to China. These horses were secured by halters, and hidden about dusk in the thick-

ets which lined the margin of the river. To these thickets, about ten at night, the four fugitives repaired; they took a circuitous path, which drew them as little as possible within danger of challenge from any of the outposts or of the patrols which had been established on the quarters where the Bashkirs lay; and in three-quarters of an hour they reached the rendezvous. The moon had now risen, the horses were unfastened, and they were in the act of mounting, when suddenly the deep silence of the woods was disturbed by a violent uproar and the clashing of arms. Weseloff fancied that he heard the voice of the Khan shouting for assistance. He remembered the communication made by that prince in the morning; and requesting his companions to support him, he rode off in the direction of the sound. A very short distance brought him to an open glade within the wood, where he beheld four men contending with a party of at least nine or ten. Two of the four were dismounted at the very instant of Weseloff's arrival; one of these he recognised almost certainly as the Khan, who was fighting hand to hand, but at great disadvantage, with two of the adverse horsemen. Seeing that no time was to be lost, Weseloff fired and brought down one of the two. His companions discharged their carbines at the same moment, and then all rushed simultaneously into the little open area. The thundering sound of about thirty horses all rushing at once into a narrow space gave the impression that a whole troop of cavalry was coming down upon the assailants, who accordingly wheeled about and fled with one impulse. Weseloff advanced to the dismounted cavalier, who, as he expected, proved be the Khan. The man whom Weseloff had shot was lying dead; and both were shocked, though Weseloff at least was not surprised, on stooping down and scrutinising his features, to recognise a well-known

confidential servant of Zebek-Dorchi. Nothing was said by either party; the Khan rode off escorted by Weseloff and his companions, and for some time a dead silence prevailed. The situation of Weseloff was delicate and critical; to leave the Khan at this point was probably to cancel their recent services; for he might be again crossed on his path, and again attacked by the very party from whom he had just been delivered. Yet, on the other hand, to return to the camp was to endanger the chances of accomplishing the escape. The Khan also was apparently revolving all this in his mind, for at length he broke silence, and said, "I comprehend your situation; and under other circumstances I might feel it my duty to detain your companions. But it would ill become me to do so after the important service you have just rendered me. Let us turn a little to the left. There, where you see the watch-fire, is an outpost. Attend me so far. I am then safe. You may turn and pursue your enterprise; for the circumstances under which you will appear, as my escort, are sufficient to shield you from all suspicion for the present. I regret having no better means at my disposal for testifying my gratitude. But tell me before we part—Was it accident only which led you to my rescue? Or had you acquired any knowledge of the plot by which I was decoyed into this snare?" Weseloff answered very candidly that mere accident had brought him to the spot at which he heard the uproar, but that *having* heard it, and connecting it with the Khan's communication of the morning, he had then designedly gone after the sound in a way which he certainly should not have done at so critical a moment, unless in the expectation of finding the Khan assaulted by assassins. A few minutes after they reached the outpost at which it became safe to leave the Tartar chieftain; and immediately the four fugitives

commenced a flight which is perhaps without a parallel in the annals of travelling. Each of them led six or seven horses besides the one he rode; and, by shifting from one to the other (like the ancient Desultors of the Roman circus), so as never to burden the same horse for more than half an hour at a time, they continued to advance at the rate of 200 miles in the 24 hours for three days consecutively. After that time, conceiving themselves beyond pursuit, they proceeded less rapidly; though still with a velocity which staggered the belief of Weseloff's friends in after years. He was, however, a man of high principle, and always adhered firmly to the details of his printed report. One of the circumstances there stated is that they continued to pursue the route by which the Kalmucks had fled, never for an instant finding any difficulty in tracing it by the skeletons and other memorials of their calamities. In particular, he mentions vast heaps of money as part of the valuable property which it had been found necessary to sacrifice. These heaps were found lying still untouched in the deserts. From these Weseloff and his companions took as much as they could conveniently carry; and this it was, with the price of their beautiful horses, which they afterwards sold at one of the Russian military settlements for about £15 apiece, which eventually enabled them to pursue their journey in Russia. This journey, as regarded Weseloff in particular, was closed by a tragical catastrophe. He was at that time young, and the only child of a doating mother. Her affliction under the violent abduction of her son had been excessive, and probably had undermined her constitution. Still she had supported it. Weseloff, giving way to the natural impulses of his filial affection, had imprudently posted through Russia to his mother's house without warning of his approach. He rushed precipitately into her presence;

and she, who had stood the shocks of sorrow, was found unequal to the shock of joy too sudden and too acute. She died upon the spot.

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36. I now revert to the final scenes of the Kalmuck flight. These it would be useless to pursue circumstantially through the whole two thousand miles of suffering which remained; for the character of that suffering was even more monotonous than on the former half of the flight, and also more severe. Its main elements were excessive heat, with the accompaniments of famine and thirst, but aggravated at every step by the murderous attacks of their cruel enemies the Bashkirs and the Kirghises.

37. These people, "more fell than anguish, hunger, or the sea," stuck to the unhappy Kalmucks like a swarm of enraged hornets. And very often, whilst *they* were attacking them in the rear, their advanced parties and flanks were attacked with almost equal fury by the people of the country which they were traversing; and with good reason, since the law of self-preservation had now obliged the fugitive Tartars to plunder provisions, and to forage wherever they passed. In this respect their condition was a constant oscillation of wretchedness; for sometimes, pressed by grinding famine, they took a circuit of perhaps a hundred miles, in order to strike into a land rich in the comforts of life; but in such a land they were sure to find a crowded population, of which every arm was raised in unrelenting hostility, with all the advantages of local knowledge, and with constant pre-occupation of all the defensible positions, mountain passes, or bridges. Sometimes, again, wearied out with this mode of suffering, they took a circuit of perhaps a hundred miles, in order to strike into a land with few or no inhabitants. But in such a land they

were sure to meet absolute starvation. Then, again, whether with or without this plague of starvation, whether with or without this plague of hostility in front, whatever might be the "fierce varieties" of their misery in this respect, no rest ever came to their unhappy rear; *post equitem sedet atra cura;* it was a torment like the undying worm of conscience. And, upon the whole, it presented a spectacle altogether unprecedented in the history of mankind. Private and personal malignity is not unfrequently immortal; but rare indeed is it to find the same pertinacity of malice in a nation. And what embittered the interest was that the malice was reciprocal. Thus far the parties met upon equal terms; but that equality only sharpened the sense of their dire inequality as to other circumstances. The Bashkirs were ready to fight "from morn to dewy eve." The Kalmucks, on the contrary, were always obliged to run. Was it *from* their enemies as creatures whom they feared? No; but *towards* their friends—towards that final haven of China—as what was hourly implored by the prayers of their wives, and the tears of their children. But, though they fled unwillingly, too often they fled in vain —being unwillingly recalled. There lay the torment. Every day the Bashkirs fell upon them; every day the same unprofitable battle was renewed; as a matter of course, the Kalmucks recalled part of their advanced guard to fight them; every day the battle raged for hours, and uniformly with the same result. For no sooner did the Bashkirs find themselves too heavily pressed, and that the Kalmuck march had been retarded by some hours, than they retired into the boundless deserts, where all pursuit was hopeless. But, if the Kalmucks resolved to press forward, regardless of their enemies, in that case their attacks became so fierce and overwhelming that the general safety seemed likely to

be brought into question; nor could any effectual remedy be applied to the case, even for each separate day, except by a most embarrassing halt, and by countermarches that, to men in their circumstances, were almost worse than death. It will not be surprising that the irritation of such a systematic persecution, superadded to a previous and hereditary hatred, and accompanied by the stinging consciousness of utter impotence as regarded all effectual vengeance, should gradually have inflamed the Kalmuck animosity into the wildest expression of downright madness and frenzy. Indeed, long before the frontiers of China were approached, the hostility of both sides had assumed the appearance much more of a warfare amongst wild beasts than amongst creatures acknowledging the restraints of reason or the claims of a common nature. The spectacle became too atrocious; it was that of a host of lunatics pursued by a host of fiends.

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38. On a fine morning in the early autumn of the year 1771, Kien Long, the Emperor of China, was pursuing his amusements in a wild frontier district lying on the outside of the Great Wall. For many hundred square leagues the country was desolate of inhabitants, but rich in woods of ancient growth, and overrun with game of every description. In a central spot of this solitary region the Emperor had built a gorgeous hunting lodge, to which he resorted annually for recreation and relief from the cares of government. Led onwards in pursuit of game, he had rambled to a distance of 200 miles or more from this lodge, followed at a little distance by a sufficient military escort, and every night pitching his tent in a different situation, until at length he had arrived on the very margin of the vast

central deserts of Asia.[1] Here he was standing by accident at an opening of his pavilion, enjoying the morning sunshine, when suddenly to the westwards there arose a vast cloudy vapour, which by degrees expanded, mounted, and seemed to be slowly diffusing itself over the whole face of the heavens. By and by this vast sheet of mist began to thicken towards the horizon, and to roll forward in billowy volumes. The Emperor's suite assembled from all quarters. The silver trumpets were sounded in the rear, and from all the glades and forest avenues began to trot forward towards the pavilion the yagers—half-cavalry, half-huntsmen—who composed the imperial escort. Conjecture was on the stretch to divine the cause of this phenomenon, and the interest continually increased, in proportion as simple curiosity gradually deepened into the anxiety of uncertain danger. At first it had been imagined that some vast troops of deer, or other wild animals of the chase, had been disturbed in their forest haunts by the Emperor's movements, or possibly by wild beasts prowling for prey, and might be fetching a compass by way of re-entering the forest grounds at some remoter points secure from molestation. But this conjecture was dissipated by the slow increase of the cloud, and the steadiness of its motion. In the course of two hours the vast phenomenon had advanced to a point which was judged to be within five miles of the spectators, though all calculations of distance were difficult, and often fallacious, when applied to the endless expanses of the Tartar deserts. Through the next

[1] All the circumstances are learned from a long state paper upon the subject of this Kalmuck migration, drawn up in the Chinese language by the Emperor himself. Parts of this paper have been translated by the Jesuit missionaries. The Emperor states the whole motives of his conduct and the chief incidents at great length.

hour, during which the gentle morning breeze had a little freshened, the dusty vapour had developed itself far and wide into the appearance of huge aerial draperies, hanging in mighty volumes from the sky to the earth; and at particular points, where the eddies of the breeze acted upon the pendulous skirts of these aerial curtains, rents were perceived, sometimes taking the form of regular arches, portals, and windows, through which began dimly to gleam the heads of camels "indorsed"[1] with human beings—and at intervals the moving of men and horses in tumultuous array—and then through other openings or vistas at far distant points the flashing of polished arms. But sometimes, as the wind slackened or died away, all those openings, of whatever form, in the cloudy pall would slowly close, and for a time the whole pageant was shut up from view; although the growing din, the clamours, shrieks, and groans, ascending from infuriated myriads, reported, in a language not to be misunderstood, what was going on behind the cloudy screen.

39. It was in fact the Kalmuck host, now in the last extremities of their exhaustion, and very fast approaching to that final stage of privation and killing misery beyond which few or none could have lived, but also, happily for themselves, fast approaching (in a literal sense) that final stage of their long pilgrimage at which they would meet hospitality on a scale of royal magnificence, and full protection from their enemies. These enemies, however, as yet, were still hanging on their rear as fiercely as ever, though this day was destined to be the last of their hideous persecution. The Khan had, in fact, sent forward couriers with all the requisite statements and petitions, addressed to the Emperor of China.

[1] *Camels "indorsed"*:—"And elephants indorsed with towers."—MILTON in "Paradise Regained."

These had been duly received, and preparations made in consequence to welcome the Kalmucks with the most paternal benevolence. But, as these couriers had been despatched from the Torgau at the moment of arrival thither, and before the advance of Traubenberg had made it necessary for the Khan to order a hasty renewal of the flight, the Emperor had not looked for their arrival on his frontiers until full three months after the present time. The Khan had indeed expressly notified his intention to pass the summer heats on the banks of the Torgau, and to recommence his retreat about the beginning of September. The subsequent change of plan, being unknown to Kien Long, left him for some time in doubt as to the true interpretation to be put upon this mighty apparition in the desert; but at length the savage clamours of hostile fury, and the clangour of weapons, unveiled to the Emperor the true nature of those unexpected calamities which had so prematurely precipitated the Kalmuck measures.

40. Apprehending the real state of affairs, the Emperor instantly perceived that the first act of his fatherly care for these erring children (as he esteemed them), now returning to their ancient obedience, must be—to deliver them from their pursuers. And this was less difficult than might have been supposed. Not many miles in the rear was a body of well-appointed cavalry, with a strong detachment of artillery, who always attended the Emperor's motions. These were hastily summoned. Meantime it occurred to the train of courtiers that some danger might arise to the Emperor's person from the proximity of a lawless enemy; and accordingly he was induced to retire a little to the rear. It soon appeared, however, to those who watched the vapoury shroud in the desert, that its motion was not such as would argue the direction of the march to be exactly upon the pavil-

ion, but rather in a diagonal line, making an angle of full 45 degrees with that line in which the imperial *cortége* had been standing, and therefore with a distance continually increasing. Those who knew the country judged that the Kalmucks were making for a large fresh-water lake about seven or eight miles distant. They were right; and to that point the imperial cavalry was ordered up; and it was precisely in that spot, and about three hours after, and at noonday on the 8th of September, that the great Exodus of the Kalmuck Tartars was brought to a final close, and with a scene of such memorable and hellish fury, as formed an appropriate winding up to an expedition in all its parts and details so awfully disastrous. The Emperor was not personally present, or at least he saw whatever he *did* see from too great a distance to discriminate its individual features; but he records in his written memorial the report made to him of this scene by some of his own officers.

41. The lake of Tengis, near the dreadful desert of Kobi, lay in a hollow amongst hills of a moderate height, ranging generally from two to three thousand feet high. About eleven o'clock in the forenoon, the Chinese cavalry reached the summit of a road which led through a cradle-like dip in the mountains right down upon the margin of the lake. From this pass, elevated about two thousand feet above the level of the water, they continued to descend, by a very winding and difficult road, for an hour and a half; and during the whole of this descent they were compelled to be inactive spectators of the fiendish spectacle below. The Kalmucks, reduced by this time from about six hundred thousand souls to two hundred and sixty thousand, and after enduring for so long a time the miseries I have previously described—outrageous heat, famine, and the destroying scimitar of the Kir-

ghises and the Bashkirs—had for the last ten days been traversing a hideous desert, where no vestiges were seen of vegetation, and no drop of water could be found. Camels and men were already so overladen, that it was a mere impossibility that they should carry a tolerable sufficiency for the passage of this frightful wilderness. On the eighth day, the wretched daily allowance, which had been continually diminishing, failed entirely; and thus, for two days of insupportable fatigue, the horrors of thirst had been carried to the fiercest extremity. Upon this last morning, at the sight of the hills and the forest scenery, which announced to those who acted as guides the neighbourhood of the lake of Tengis, all the people rushed along with maddening eagerness to the anticipated solace. The day grew hotter and hotter, the people more and more exhausted, and gradually, in the general rush forwards to the lake, all discipline and command were lost—all attempts to preserve a rearguard were neglected—the wild Bashkirs rode in amongst the encumbered people, and slaughtered them by wholesale, and almost without resistance. Screams and tumultuous shouts proclaimed the progress of the massacre; but none heeded—none halted; all alike, pauper or noble, continued to rush on with maniacal haste to the waters—all with faces blackened by the heat preying upon the liver, and with tongue drooping from the mouth. The cruel Bashkir was affected by the same misery, and manifested the same symptoms of his misery as the wretched Kalmuck; the murderer was oftentimes in the same frantic misery as his murdered victim—many indeed (an ordinary effect of thirst) in both nations had become lunatic, and in this state, whilst mere multitude and condensation of bodies alone opposed any check to the destroying scimitar and the trampling hoof, the lake was reached; and into that the whole vast body of ene-

mies rushed, and together continued to rush, forgetful of all things at that moment but of one almighty instinct. This absorption of the thoughts in one maddening appetite lasted for a single half-hour; but in the next arose the final scene of parting vengeance. Far and wide the waters of the solitary lake were instantly dyed red with blood and gore: here rode a party of savage Bashkirs, hewing off heads as fast as the swathes fall before the mower's scythe; there stood unarmed Kalmucks in a death-grapple with their detested foes, both up to the middle in water, and oftentimes both sinking together below the surface, from weakness or from struggles, and perishing in each other's arms. Did the Bashkirs at any point collect into a cluster for the sake of giving impetus to the assault? Thither were the camels driven in fiercely by those who rode them, generally women or boys; and even these quiet creatures were forced into a share of this carnival of murder, by trampling down as many as they could strike prostrate with the lash of their fore-legs. Every moment the water grew more polluted; and yet every moment fresh myriads came up to the lake and rushed in, not able to resist their frantic thirst, and swallowing large draughts of water visibly contaminated with the blood of their slaughtered compatriots. Wheresoever the lake was shallow enough to allow of men raising their heads above the water, there, for scores of acres, were to be seen all forms of ghastly fear, of agonising struggle, of spasm, of death, and the fear of death—revenge, and the lunacy of revenge—until the neutral spectators, of whom there were not a few, now descending the eastern side of the lake, at length averted their eyes in horror. This horror, which seemed incapable of further addition, was, however, increased by an unexpected incident. The Bashkirs, beginning to perceive here and there the

approach of the Chinese cavalry, felt it prudent—wheresoever they were sufficiently at leisure from the passions of the murderous scene—to gather into bodies. This was noticed by the governor of a small Chinese fort, built upon an eminence above the lake; and immediately he threw in a broadside, which spread havoc amongst the Bashkir tribe. As often as the Bashkirs collected into "*globes*" and "*turms*," as their only means of meeting the long lines of descending Chinese cavalry—so often did the Chinese governor of the fort pour in his exterminating broadside; until at length the lake, at its lower end, became one vast seething caldron of human bloodshed and carnage. The Chinese cavalry had reached the foot of the hills: the Bashkirs, attentive to *their* movements, had formed; skirmishes had been fought: and, with a quick sense that the contest was henceforwards rapidly becoming hopeless, the Bashkirs and Kirghises began to retire. The pursuit was not as vigorous as the Kalmuck hatred would have desired. But, at the same time, the very gloomiest hatred could not but find, in their own dreadful experience of the Asiatic deserts, and in the certainty that these wretched Bashkirs had to repeat that same experience a second time, for thousands of miles, as the price exacted by a retributory Providence for their vindictive cruelty—not the very gloomiest of the Kalmucks, or the least reflecting, but found in all this a retaliatory chastisement more complete and absolute than any which their swords and lances could have obtained, or human vengeance have devised.

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42. Here ends the tale of the Kalmuck wanderings in the Desert; for any subsequent marches which awaited them were neither long nor painful. Every possible alleviation and refreshment for their exhausted bodies

had been already provided by Kien Long with the most princely munificence; and lands of great fertility were immediately assigned to them in ample extent along the river Ily, not very far from the point at which they had first emerged from the wilderness of Kobi. But the beneficent attention of the Chinese Emperor may be best stated in his own words as translated into French by one of the Jesuit missionaries:—"La nation des Torgotes (*savoir les Kalmuques*) arriva à Ily, toute delabrée, n'ayant ni de quoi vivre, ni de quoi se vêtir. Je l'avais prévu; et j'avais ordonné de faire en tout genre les provisions nécessaires pour pouvoir les secourir promptement: c'est ce qui a été exécuté. On a fait la division des terres; et on a assigné à chaque famille une portion suffisante pour pouvoir servir à son entretien, soit en la cultivant, soit en y nourissant des bestiaux. On a donné à chaque particulier des étoffes pour l'habiller, des grains pour se nourrir pendant l'espace d'une année, des ustensiles pour le ménage, et d'autres choses nécessaires: et outre cela plusieurs onces d'argent, pour se pourvoir de ce qu'on aurait pu oublier. On a designé des lieux particuliers, fertiles en pâturages; et on leur a donné des bœufs, moutons, etc., pour qu'ils pussent dans la suite travailler par euxmêmes à leur entretien et à leur bien être."

43. These are the words of the Emperor himself speaking in his own person of his own parental cares; but another Chinese, treating the same subject, records the munificence of this prince in terms which proclaim still more forcibly the disinterested generosity which prompted, and the delicate considerateness which conducted, this extensive bounty. He has been speaking of the Kalmucks, and he goes on thus:—"Lorsqu'ils arrivérent sur nos frontiéres (au nombre de plusieurs centaines de mille, quoique la fatigue extrême, la faim, la soif, et

toutes les autres incommodités inséparables d'une trés longue et trés pénible route en eussent fait périr presque autant), ils étaient réduits à la dernière misère; ils manquaient de tout. Il" [viz., l'Empereur, Kien Long] "leur fit préparer des logemens conformes à leur manière de vivre; il leur fit distribuer des alimens et des habits; il leur fit donner des bœufs, des moutons, et des ustensiles, pour les mettre en état de former des troupeaux et de cultiver la terre, et tout cela à ses propres frais, qui se sont montés à des sommes immenses, sans compter l'argent qu'il a donné à chaque chef-de-famille, pour pourvoir á la subsistance de sa femme et de ses enfans."

44. Thus, after their memorable year of misery, the Kalmucks were replaced in territorial possessions, and in comfort equal perhaps, or even superior, to that which they had enjoyed in Russia, and with superior political advantages. But, if equal or superior, their condition was no longer the same; if not in degree, their social prosperity had altered in quality; for, instead of being a purely pastoral and vagrant people, they were now in circumstances which obliged them to become essentially dependent upon agriculture; and thus far raised in social rank, that, by the natural course of their habits and the necessities of life, they were effectually reclaimed from roving and from the savage customs connected with a half nomadic life. They gained also in political privileges, chiefly through the immunity from military service which their new relations enabled them to obtain. These were circumstances of advantage and gain. But one great disadvantage there was, amply to overbalance all other possible gain; the chances were lost or were removed to an incalculable distance for their conversion to Christianity, without which, in these times, there is no absolute advance possible on the path of true civilisation.

45. One word remains to be said upon the *personal* interests concerned in this great drama. The catastrophe in this respect was remarkable and complete. Oubacha, with all his goodness and incapacity of suspecting, had, since the mysterious affair on the banks of the Torgau, felt his mind alienated from his cousin; he revolted from the man that would have murdered him; and he had displayed his caution so visibly as to provoke a reaction in the bearing of Zebek-Dorchi, and a displeasure which all his dissimulation could not hide. This had produced a feud, which, by keeping them aloof, had probably saved the life of Oubacha; for the friendship of Zebek-Dorchi was more fatal than his open enmity. After the settlement on the Ily this feud continued to advance, until it came under the notice of the Emperor, on occasion of a visit which all the Tartar chieftains made to his Majesty at his hunting lodge in 1772. The Emperor informed himself accurately of all the particulars connected with the transaction—of all the rights and claims put forward—and of the way in which they would severally affect the interests of the Kalmuck people. The consequence was that he adopted the cause of Oubacha, and repressed the pretensions of Zebek-Dorchi, who, on his part, so deeply resented this discountenance to his ambitious projects, that, in conjunction with other chiefs, he had the presumption even to weave nets of treason against the Emperor himself. Plots were laid, were detected, were baffled; counter-plots were constructed upon the same basis, and with the benefit of the opportunities thus offered. Finally, Zebek-Dorchi was invited to the imperial lodge, together with all his accomplices; and, under the skilful management of the Chinese nobles in the Emperor's establishment, the murderous artifices of these Tartar chieftains were made to recoil upon themselves; and the whole of them perished

by assassination at a great imperial banquet. For the Chinese morality is exactly of that kind which approves in everything the *lex talionis*:—

> "Lex nec justior ulla est (as *they* think)
> Quam necis artifices arte perire sua."

46. So perished Zebek-Dorchi, the author and originator of the great Tartar Exodus. Oubacha, meantime, and his people, were gradually recovering from the effects of their misery, and repairing their losses. Peace and prosperity, under the gentle rule of a fatherly lord paramount, re-dawned upon the tribes: their household *lares*, after so harsh a translation to distant climes, found again a happy re-instatement in what had in fact been their primitive abodes: they found themselves settled in quiet sylvan scenes, rich in all the luxuries of life, and endowed with the perfect loveliness of Arcadian beauty. But from the hills of this favoured land, and even from the level grounds as they approached its western border, they still look out upon that fearful wilderness which once beheld a nation in agony—the utter extirpation of nearly half a million from amongst its numbers, and, for the remainder, a storm of misery so fierce that in the end (as happened also at Athens during the Peloponnesian War from a different form of misery) very many lost their memory; all records of their past life were wiped out as with a sponge—utterly erased and cancelled: and many others lost their reason; some in a gentle form of pensive melancholy, some in a more restless form of feverish delirium and nervous agitation, and others in the fixed forms of tempestuous mania, raving frenzy, or moping idiocy. Two great commemorative monuments arose in after years to mark the depth and permanence of the awe—the sacred and reverential grief with which all persons looked back upon

the dread calamities attached to the year of the tiger—all who had either personally shared in those calamities, and had themselves drunk from that cup of sorrow, or who had effectually been made witnesses to their results, and associated with their relief: two great monuments; one embodied in the religious solemnity, enjoined by the Dalai Lama, called in the Tartar language a *Romanang*—that is, a national commemoration, with music the most rich and solemn, of all the souls who departed to the rest of Paradise from the afflictions of the Desert (this took place about six years after the arrival in China); secondly, another, more durable and more commensurate to the scale of the calamity and to the grandeur of this national Exodus, in the mighty columns of granite and brass erected by the Emperor Kien Long near the banks of the Ily. These columns stand upon the very margin of the *steppes;* and they bear a short but emphatic inscription[1] to the following effect:—

By the Will of God,
Here, upon the Brink of these Deserts,
Which from this Point begin and stretch away
Pathless, treeless, waterless,
For thousands of miles—and along the margins of many mighty Nations,

[1] This inscription has been slightly altered in one or two phrases, and particularly in adapting to the Christian era the Emperor's expressions for the year of the original Exodus from China and the retrogressive Exodus from Russia. With respect to the designation adopted for the Russian Emperor, either it is built upon some confusion between him and the Byzantine Cæsars, as though the former, being of the same religion with the latter (and occupying in part the same longitudes, though in different latitudes), might be considered as his modern successor; or else it refers simply to the Greek form of Christianity professed by the Russian Emperor and Church.

Rested from their labours and from great afflictions,
Under the shadow of the Chinese Wall,
And by the favour of KIEN LONG, God's Lieutenant upon Earth, The ancient Children of the Wilderness—the Torgote Tartars—
Flying before the wrath of the Grecian Czar,
Wandering Sheep who had strayed away from the Celestial Empire in the year 1616,
But are now mercifully gathered again, after infinite sorrow,
Into the fold of their forgiving Shepherd.
Hallowed be the spot for ever,
and
Hallowed be the day—September 8, 1771!
Amen.

# NOTES

[*Remark.*—The following notes are (1) explanatory, where information is not easily to be had ; (2) directive, where information lies ready to hand in ordinary books of reference, and where the student may be led into criticism of his own. Such notes as obviate reference on the part of the student, or discourage his criticism by completely forestalling it, are deprecated by the editor as a hindrance in education.

By "ordinary books of reference" are meant the following :

(A) *A good dictionary.* Every school may be presumed to have at least a Webster, a Worcester, or a Stormonth. Many schools provide also one of the larger dictionaries, the Century, the Standard, or the Imperial. Therefore many words are inserted in the notes with a mere query, the object of the editor being to induce some appreciation of the nicety of De Quincey's diction by the only adequate means—personal investigation. Consideration of etymology is suggested only where it appeals to the student's knowledge of common classical roots, prefixes, and suffixes. Some teachers may find it worth while to push this farther. The study of the diction will receive additional profit from the use of a good book of synonyms, for instance Smith's *Synonyms Discriminated.*

(B) *A good manual of universal history.* The following one-volume manuals are in common use:

(*a*) Fisher, George P.: *Outlines of Universal History* (New York and Chicago, The American Book Co.). This is a continuous summary narrative, with dates, maps, charts, etc.

(*b*) Ploetz, Carl : *Epitome of Ancient, Mediæval, and Modern History*, translated, with extensive additions, by William H. Tillinghast (Boston, Houghton, Mifflin & Co.). This is a classified date-book, with brief, clear summaries.

(*c*) Andrews, E. Benjamin : *Brief Institutes of General History* (Boston, Silver, Burdette & Co.). This is narrative, by periods, each period prefaced by a brief bibliography.

(*d*) Labberton, Robert H.: *New Historical Atlas and General History* (New York, Townsend MacCoun). The chief value of this

book is in its maps. The summaries of periods are briefer than in the other books. There are brief bibliographies of each period.

(*a*) and (*b*), Fisher and Ploetz, are referred to by page in the following notes. Such a manual may be supplemented, or its place may often be taken; either by one of the briefer cyclopædias—Johnson's, Chambers's, Appleton's, or the International; or by the ordinary manuals of Greek, Roman, and English history respectively. References are also made, sparingly, to the classic histories of Gibbon, Grote, Josephus, etc., to stimulate such students as have access to a good library.

(C) *A good atlas.* Some of the places mentioned in the narrative are obscure, but most will be found even in the larger school geographies. All doubtful points receive comment in the notes. A rough clue to the route of the Kalmucks, which was, of course, wide, and far from straight, may be gained by drawing a line from Astrakhan at the mouth of the Volga to the northern end of the Caspian Sea, thence to the northern end of the Aral Sea, and finally to the borders of China at Lake Balkash. The stages of the flight are marked, as De Quincey says, by "the central rivers of Asia"—the Ural (or Jaik), the Emba (or Jemba), and the Irgitch.]

¶ 1. The first sentence expresses the subject both of this paragraph and of the whole piece.

[Words to examine: *romantic* (**3** 11), *barbaric* (compare *barbarous*) (**3** 14), *leeming* (**3** 19).]

**3** 5. *Tartar*, more properly Tatar. See p. xxvi., and consult a cyclopædia. The term is no longer very specific. As ordinarily used, it refers to the Mongols. Doubtless the proverb about catching a Tartar, *i. e.*, getting a captive too strong to manage, is one of the many echoes of the terror inspired by the great Mongol invasions. See page xxv., and the note on **30** 11.

**3** 5. *Steppes.* The Russian steppes correspond roughly to the North American prairies and the South American pampas, in that they are treeless and often grassy; but in degree of vegetation they are more like the Scotch heaths.

**3** 6. *Terminus a quo.* Is anything gained by the Latin phrases? Find exact English equivalents for both, and compare **61** 8.

**3** 8. *Christian, Pagan.* Compare **11** 13 and the note thereon.

**3** 23. *Miltonic images.* Does this mean simply Milton's images, or is there a kind of image that may be called Miltonic and, if so, what kind?

**4** 1. *The solitary hand.* See *Paradise Lost*, book vi., lines 139, 834; and compare book x., 431.

¶ 2. The revolt may challenge comparison with other great national catastrophes as to its dramatic capabilities.

[Words to examine : *catastrophes* (**4** 6 ; etymology ? equivalent to *calamities ?* Compare **32** 34, **64** 2), *collation* (**4** 10), *sanctions* (**4** 14), *anabasis* (**4** 24, etymology?), *katabasis* (**4** 30), *oracle* (**4** 31).]

**4** 18. "*Venice Preserved,*" by Thomas Otway, appeared in 1682.

**4** 19. *The "Fiesco" of Schiller* was written in 1782. The scene is laid at Venice in the sixteenth century.

**4** 24–27. These references may be explained with the aid of the common histories of Greece and of Rome. Their place and bearing will be better understood by reference to Fisher or to Ploetz, as follows :

**4** 24. *Cambyses*, Fisher, p. 67; Ploetz, p. 27.

**4** 25. *Cyrus*, Fisher, p. 109; Ploetz, p. 29.

**4** 27. *Crassus*, Fisher, p. 163; Ploetz, pp. 30, 140.

**4** 27. *Julian*, Fisher, p. 194; Ploetz, pp. 160, 188. De Quincey evidently refers to Julian's expedition against the Persians, recounted in chapter xxiv. of Gibbon's *Decline and Fall of the Roman Empire.*

**4** 30. *Napoleon.* Consult a cyclopædia, a history of modern Europe, or Fisher, p. 530; Ploetz, p. 474.

**4** 33. *Great Scriptural Exodus.* Cite the chapters in which this is recorded.

¶ 3. The story has even great scenical possibilities.

[Words to examine : *invests* (**5** 4, etymology?), *scenical* (**5** 8), *tragical* (**5** 23, terrible?), *authentic* (**5** 28).]

**5** 14. *Wolga*, pronounced and usually written in English *Volga* (De Quincey follows Bergmann's German spelling); the largest river of Russia. Consult a map. The Kalmucks were near the southern course of the Volga, not far from its mouths.

¶ 4. The situation as to the two main persons involved is as follows.

[Words to examine: *quality* (**6** 2), *humanised* (**6** 8), *exasperated* (**6** 12, etymology?), *surveillance* (**6** 16), *dilemma* (**6** 23), *kindness, affability* (**7** 20), *pretensions* (**7** 25). Compare (**10** 24), *dissimulation—hypocrisy—perfidy* (**8** 5).]

**5** 34. *Kalmucks.* See page xxv. *Assumed the sceptre.* Does this expression seem a trifle too grand? Have you noticed any parallels in this piece ?

**6** 2. *Khan* is a Tartar word for sovereign prince, as in Genghis Khan, Kubla Khan. In earlier English it often appears as *Cham*. "The great *Cham* of Tartary" is a common expression.

**6** 13. *Nationality—unparalleled.* De Quincey probably refers to the strong racial peculiarities of the Mongols (see p. xxvi.), perhaps also to their great military achievements.

**6** 17. *Lord paramount* (compare **65** 10), a feudal term. In the feudal system all the land of a country theoretically belonged to the king or emperor, who was *lord paramount; i.e.*, lord over all other lords. De Quincey very likely caught the word from Hooker, who says of the Pope, in *A Discourse of Justification:* "Let him no longer count himselfe *lord paramount* over the princes of the world." (Quoted in Skeat's *Etymological Dictionary*.)

**6** 17. *Czar*, or *Tsar, i.e.*, emperor. By some authorities the word is derived ultimately, like the German *Kaiser*, from the Latin Cæsar, the cognomen of the great Caius Julius. The feminine is *Czarina*, empress, used at **12** 24 and elsewhere throughout the piece.

**6** 18. *Natural unamiableness* does not seem warranted.

¶ 5. The first step in the plot of Zebek Dorchi was to have the government of the Kalmucks so reorganized as to give him control.

[Words to examine: *sagacious* (**8** 12); *hoodwinked* (**8** 22, etymology? original application?); *soliciting* (**8** 31); *covertly* (**8** 35, etymology?); *balance of power* (**9** 6, explain this common figure); *subordinate—co-ordinate* (**9** 10, etymology?); *passion* (**10** 6)].

**8** 5. *Machiavelian.* Consult the Century Dictionary, or a cyclopædia under the heading *Machiavelli.*

**8** 15. *Elizabeth Petrowna.* See **18** 22.

**8** 28. *Teherkask*, one of the most important towns in the country of the Don Cossacks, is on the River Don, near its mouth, and so not far from the Sea of Azov.

**8** 29. *Sixty-five tents; i.e.*, sixty-five families. Among the Mongol nomads this is a common method of counting.

**9** 1. *Point of that wedge.* The proverb is usually heard, "the thin end of the wedge," or "the entering wedge." What is the allusion?

**9** 5. *Re-organized.* See Appendix C, p. 91.

**9** 24. *300 roubles.* The rouble, or ruble, is a Russian coin worth, at standard value, seventy-seven cents. The word is cognate with *rupee*, the standard coin (two shillings) of British India.

¶ 6. Having accomplished this re-organization, he dared to concert the revolt of the whole Kalmuck people from Russia.

[Words to examine: *exchequer* (**10** 15); *consanguinity* (**10** 25, etymology ?) ; *colossal* (**11** 6); *potentate* (**11** 11); *autocrat* (**12** 4, etymology ?); *translation* (**12** 8).]

**11** 9. *Behemoth.* See *Job* xl. 15. Whether the animal meant is some species of the elephant or of the hippopotamus is not certain. Bergmann's figure (vol. i., p. 154) is of a giant and a dwarf. Why is De Quincey's more effective?

**11** 11. *Three hundred languages.* It is easy to think of Russia as only a European power. Examine on the map the extent of the Russian territory, observe that it is quite as much Asiatic as European, and the basis of De Quincey's statement will appear. No other nation in all history has combined so many races or in such numbers.

**11** 13. "*Lion ramp*" is quoted from Milton's *Samson Agonistes*, line 139.

**11** 13. "*Baptized and infidel.*" The allusion is to *Paradise Lost*, book i., line 582; but Milton says "baptized *or* infidel." Examine the other quotations in this piece as to their accuracy. Does the result seem to indicate anything more than that De Quincey habitually quoted from memory without verification?

*Infidel*, from the time of the Crusades came to be applied especially to the Mohammedans ; and the antithesis *baptized and infidel* reminds one forcibly how religious differences emphasized the heterogeneity of the immense Russian empire.

**11** 15. "*Barbaric East*" is probably an inaccurate recollection of *Paradise Lost*, book ii., lines 3 and 4.

**11** 21. *The unity of a well-laid tragic fable ; i.e.*, the unity of a well-planned tragic plot. For a definition of literary unity in general see page xxxiii. The allusion here is to the so-called three dramatic unities: the unity of action, according to which a drama should unfold one main action, or plot, to which all other lines of action should be subordinate; the unity of time, according to which the action should be accomplished in one day; and the unity of place, according to which the scene should not be changed. These are also called the Aristotelian unities; but Aristotle (in his *Poetics*) insists only on the first. The other two, though occasionally kept with striking effect in all ages of the drama, have had continued prevalence only on the Greek stage, and the French stage of the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Compare **4** 16.

**12** 26. *Kien Long*, "Emperor of China from 1735 to 1796, was the fourth Chinese Emperor of the Mantchoo-Tartar dynasty, and a

man of the highest reputation for ability and accomplishment." *Masson* (see Fisher, p. 449: Ploetz, p. 444). His portrait appears as the frontispiece to the report of the Earl of Macartney's embassy,[1] a book that De Quincey seems to have read with some attention. The Emperor was a patron of letters, and himself a poet.

**12** 27. *Respect for the head of their religion.* This consideration is mentioned by Father Amiot (see Appendix B, p. 89). China contained at this time a large proportion of Lamaists, who enjoyed the more favour as the reigning dynasty was Tartar.

**12** 28. *China.* Western nations incline to think contemptuously of China, and it is now declining, perhaps falling. But it still contains an amazing proportion of the population and wealth of the world, and the farther back one goes in history, the more important appears the Celestial Empire. Even to-day nothing is more striking than the perpetuation of its traditions from the remotest antiquity, and the impenetrable pride of the nation that still thinks itself the greatest in the world. De Quincey's interest in China is one instance of the breadth of his sympathies. In 1857 he published a pamphlet on the relations of the empire to England.

**12** 30. *The great Chinese Wall* (consult a cyclopædia), said to have been finished in the third century, has become a proverb of exclusiveness. The account of the embassy of the Earl of Macartney shows plans, sections, and elevations of this wall (plates 23 and 24), and a detailed account of its appearance and construction (vol. ii., pp. 178–199.) See Ploetz, p. 32.

¶ 7. The accomplices and the time were duly arranged.

[Words to examine: *substantial* (**13** 25) ; *pontiff* (**13** 29) ; *facility, profound* (**13** 34., put the phrase into simpler words) ; *of course* (**14** 19); *hostages* (**14** 30); *cogent* (**14** 31, etymology?); *fiat* (**15** 23).]

**13** 17. *Great Lama.* A lama is a Mongol priest. The reverence in which the great Lamas are held among the Kalmucks is due to the Buddhist doctrine of re-incarnation, according to which these higher priests are living Buddhas, successive appearances of the god in the flesh.

**14** 9. *Only*, properly placed ?

**14** 10. *The Dalai-Lama* might be called the Lamaist Pope. Theoretically co-ordinate with the Bandchan (or Bantschin) Lama, he is practically superior, has temporal as well as spiritual control, and, in short, occupies much the same position as the great Popes of the middle ages. The great temporal power of the Dalai-Lama

[1] See Appendix A, *Staunton.*

dates from 1643, the year of the revolution overthrowing the party of the "red lamas" and exalting that of the "yellow lamas." [1]

**14** 11. *Tibet*, or Thibet (consult a map). The seat of the Dalai-Lama is at Lassa (Lhassa). Father Huc thus describes the palace :

"The palace of the Talé Lama well deserves the celebrity it enjoys. Towards the northern part of the town, at a small distance from it, there rises a rocky mountain of no great elevation, and conical in form ; bearing the name of Buddha-La, that is, the Divine Mountain, and on this grand site the adorers of the Talé Buddha have reared a palace to their living and incarnate divinity. This palace consists of a cluster of temples, varying in size and beauty ; the central temple has an elevation of four stories ; the dome is entirely covered with plates of gold, and is surrounded by a peristyle of which the columns are likewise gilded. Here the Talé Lama has fixed his residence, and from the height of his sanctuary can contemplate, on days of high solemnities, his countless worshippers, thronging the plain and prostrating themselves at the base of the Sacred Mountain. The secondary palaces grouped around accommodate a crowd of Lamas whose continued occupation is to serve and wait on the living Buddha. Two fine avenues, bordered with magnificent trees, lead from Lha-Ssa to this temple, and there may be seen a multitude of pilgrims unrolling between their fingers the long Buddhist rosaries, and the Lamas of the Court splendidly dressed, and mounted on horses richly caparisoned. There is continual motion in the vicinity of the Buddha-La, but the multitude is generally silent and serious."—(vol. ii., p. 148.)

Lassa is now closed to foreigners.

¶ 8. To preclude suspicion, Oubacha was persuaded to contribute even more than his usual contingent for the war with Turkey.

[Words to examine : *vassalage* (**15** 30); *contingent* (**15** 31); *presentiment—misgiving* (**16** 2)].

**15** 28. *War raged.* "The war was begun in 1768, when Mustapha III. was Sultan of Turkey ; and it was continued till 1774." —*Masson.* See Ploetz, p. 412.

**15** 29. *The Sultan.* The title applies to any Mohammedan sovereign, but especially, as here, to the Emperor of Turkey. In earlier English the word appears as *Soldan* or *Sowdan.*

**16** 2. *But that,* an error for simple *but.* Compare **36** 26.

¶ 9. With this array Oubacha gained a memorable victory.

[1] Howorth, vol. i., pp. 515-517. The names of the parties refer, of course, to their costumes.

**16** 34. *Victory.* See Appendix C, p. 92.

¶ 10. But unfortunately the victory remained unhonoured by the Empress.

[Words to examine: *marshal* (**17** 8); *accommodation* (**17** 29); *preoccupied* (**17** 32); *vouchers* (**19** 7); *presumption* (**19** 9)].

**17** 9. *Paladin*, "a term originally derived from the counts Palatine, or of the palace, who were the highest dignitaries in the Byzantine court, and thence used generally for a lord or chieftain, and by the Italian romantic poets for a knight-errant."—*International Cyclopædia.* Consult one of the larger dictionaries.

**17** 24. *Ukase*, "an edict or order, legislative or administrative, emanating from the Russian government."—*Century Dictionary.*

**18** 3. *Ugly, stupid, and filthy barbarians.* "If these nomads were despised as barbarians by their cultivated neighbours, they had too great an opinion of their own descent and religion to feel affronted."—*Bergmann*, vol. i., p. 147.

**18** 7. *Barbarous religion.* See p. xxviii.

**18** 8. *Kalmuck priesthood.* See notes on **13** 17 and **14** 10.

**18** 15. *Bashkirs.* Consult a cyclopædia. The Bashkirs are partly Mongol—*i.e.*, of the same race as the Kalmucks, partly Finnish—*i.e.*, of the ancient race of the northern provinces of Russia. They are Mohammedans, and inferior in intellect.

**18** 22. *Elizabeth Petrowna* (1741–1762); *Catherine II.* (1762–1796). See Ploetz, p. 411, and, for Catherine, a cyclopædia.

¶ 11. Even had the victory been honoured, Zebek-Dorchi had taken secure measures to prevent any weakening on the part of Oubacha.

[Words to examine: *ghostly* (**20** 9); *effectually* (**20** 17); *derived* (**20** 29); *collateral* (**20** 29, etymology ?); *facility* (**21** 4).]

**19** 18. *Weseloff.* See ¶¶ 34, 35.

**19** 29. *Dark and mysterious rites*, etc. See Appendix C, p. 92.

¶ 12. The plan of revolt was finally divulged to the Kalmucks through the feint of an expedition against the Kirghises.

[Words to examine: *rhetoric* (**22** 23); *circumscribe* (**22** 34); *en masse* (**23** 14).]

**21** 31. *One vast conflagration.* Compare **27** 29 and Appendix C, p. 92.

**21** 33. *Huts.* Rather tents (compare **8** 29). They are made of felt and are called *yurts.*

**22** 15. *Kirghises*, Kirghiz or Kirghis. Consult a cyclopædia. These people are partly Mongol—resembling the Kalmucks strongly in looks—partly Tartar, speaking a Turkish dialect. They are,

perhaps, the least civilized of the nomad tribes of the steppes, and have hardly even now been cured of their predatory habits. For centuries they have divided themselves into the Great Horde, the Middle Horde, and the Little Horde, and they have given their name to the steppes as far as China.

**22** 17. *Immemorial custom.* This is perhaps based on a remark of Bergmann (ii., 191): "On a summons to war every tent is bound to furnish one man." See Appendix C on this whole paragraph.

**23** 1. *Sarepta.* The point of the reference to this particular town is that it was a colony of industrious Germans, having been founded in 1764 or 1765 by the Moravian Brethren. It is situated on the Sarpa, near where that stream empties into the Volga. The nearest large town is Tsaritsin, fifteen miles to the north.

The reference is not in Bergmann. It makes specific, and therefore more striking, an allusion of Bergmann's (i., 182) to "German immigrants."

¶ 13. The representations of Zebek-Dorchi to the Kalmuck chiefs were too plausible to be withstood.

[Words to examine: *audience* (**23** 25 and **24** 13); *seduction* (**24** 5); *conscious* (**24** 10).]

**24** 7. *Temba*, an error for Jemba (or Emba), a river rising on the west side of the Muchajar (Mougaldchares, **39** 14) Mountains (about 48° N., 58° E.), and flowing S.W. into the Caspian Sea (at about 47° N., 53° E.)

¶ 14. The result was immediate and universal preparation for revolt.

¶ 15. The Imperial Commissioner Kichinskoi played into the hands of the Kalmucks by his stupid and arrogant vanity.

[Words to examine: *arrogant* (**25** 1, etymology ?); *infatuation* (**25** 23).]

**24** 25. *Kichinskoi.* In all the earlier historians, except Bergmann, the tyranny of Kichinskoi is alleged as the moving cause of the revolt.

¶ 16. The warning despatches of the Governor of Astrakhan to the court soon proved too true.

[Words to examine: *crisis* (**25** 35), *bigotry* (**26** 8).]

**26** 1. *Governor of Astrachan.* Astrachan (Astrakhan) is a large town on the Volga, about thirty miles from its mouth. Its commerce is mainly in the products of the immense sturgeon fisheries of the Caspian.

¶ 17. The revolt began with the destruction of the Kalmuck villages. (See Appendix C.)

**27** 3. *5th of January.* Compare Appendix B, p. 89. De Quincey follows Bergmann.

**27** 7. *Troops and squadrons.* Examine the military terms throughout this paragraph.

¶ 18. The failure of the Western Kalmucks to join saved the neighbouring Russians from a terrible vengeance.

[Words to examine: *valedictory* (**28** 6); *aggravate* (**28** 25); *practised* (**29** 11).]

**28** 11. *And such treatment*, etc. What does this mean?

¶ 19. (Subject in the first sentence.)

¶ 20. The horror of this great migration is hardly paralleled in history.[1]

**30** 10. *Sudden inroads.* "Since the centuries of the tribal migrations, none of those overwhelming hordes had turned back to its old fatherland until the Kalmucks made an exception."—*Bergmann*, i., 141. This remark of Bergmann's puts the Kalmuck revolt in a wrong light, but may have suggested the train of reflection in this paragraph.

**30** 11. *Huns.* See Fisher, pp. 196, 204, 209; Ploetz, pp. 170, 173; and a cyclopædia under the headings *Huns* and *Attila.*

**30** 11. *Avars:* Fisher, pp. 221, 223; Ploetz, pp. 175, 185. *Mongol Tartars:* Fisher, pp. 283, 351; Ploetz, p. 240; cyclopædia, under the headings *Mongols, Tartars, Genghis Khan, Tamerlane;* and pp. xxv., xxvi. of the introduction to this book. By some authorities the Huns are classed as Mongols. It seems more probable, however, that the Huns and Avars were both Turanian peoples, the ancient Scythians. Gibbon (chapter xxvi. and note) makes the comparison with the Huns, and his note may have led, not only to this comparison, but to the whole piece.

**30** 17. *French retreat.* See **4** 30, and the note thereon.

**30** 22. *Vials of wrath.* The allusion is to the *Book of Revelation*, especially chapters xv. and xvi. De Quincey uses the same figure in *The English Mail Coach*, "like the opening of apocalyptic vials."

**31** 7. *Utterly unequal.* See note on **65** 21.

**31** 19. *Pestilence—Athens.* Fisher, p. 103. The famous description of this is in chapters xlvii. to liv. of the second book of Thucy-

[1] From this point on, the paragraph summaries and the noting of words for examination are left, except for occasional references, to the teacher and the student.

dides. A full and interesting account is given in Grote's *History of Greece*, chapter xlix.

**31** 21. *London—Charles II.* This is the Great Plague (1665). See Fisher, p. 459, and Defoe's *Journal of the Plague Year* in this series.

**31** 28. *Siege of Jerusalem.* Fisher, p. 180 ; Ploetz, p. 152. The famous account of this is in books v. and vi. of *The Jewish War* of Josephus.

¶ 21 gives the clue to De Quincey's conception and treatment. Compare pp. xxxi., xxxii.

**32** 6. *The River Jaik* is now called the Ural.

**32** 35. *Climax*, etymology ?

**33** 16. *Acharnement ?* What is gained by the French word ?

¶¶ 23–27. See Appendix C.

**33** 34. *Cossacks* (Kazaks, Kasaks). Consult a cyclopædia. Their race is disputed, but seems to be mainly Russian. They were an independent, democratic people, but for centuries have served as Russian cavalry, especially on the frontiers. Mazeppa was a Cossack chief. Note in Tennyson's *Charge of the Light Brigade*, "Cossack and Russian reeled at the sabre-stroke."

**34** 5. *Fisheries upon the Caspian.* Many thousands are still engaged in these fisheries. The line formed by the Caspian Sea and the Ural Mountains is regarded as the boundary between Europe and Asia. See a cyclopædia under the heading *Caspian.*

**34** 8. *Koulagina.* It is difficult, and not important, to locate this certainly. It was one of a line of stockade-forts along the Ural. Andrée's *Atlas* (plate 71) marks, about fifty miles from the mouth of the river, a town which appears, in the Russian form, as *Kulaschinskaja.*

**34** 8. *Invested, summoned ?*

**34** 10. *Few light pieces of artillery.* See Appendix C, p. 93.

**34** 29. *Ouloss* (ulus). Bergmann (i., 194, note) describes it as a large tribal company, under the command of a khan, a prince, or even a simple noble (saissang).

**34** 30. *Feka-Zechorr*, apparently an error for Bergmann's Jeka-Zechorr. *Cf.* Temba for Jemba (**24** 7).

**35** 2. *Evasion ?*

**36** 8. *Torgai.* See note on **40** 15.

**36** 30. *Unexampled triumph* is difficult to understand. It is, perhaps, mere exaggeration of phrase.

**37** 5. "*Trashed.*" Does it seem worth while to use a word that

requires a foot note? *Cf.* **56** 10. The passage from *Bonduca* is in act i., scene 1, line 49 :—

"*Nennius.* And what did you then, Caratach?
*Caratach.* I fled too;
But not so fast,—your jewel had been lost then,
Young Hengo there; he *trash'd* me, Nennius:
For, when your fears out-run him, then stept I,
And in the head of all the Roman fury
Took him, and with my tough belt to my back
I buckled him; behind him my sure shield;
And then I followed."

Dyce, in a note on this passage, says the noun *trash* is a hunting term for a clog tied round the neck of a too-forward dog.

**37** 24. *Drawing the tent-ropes*, drawing the tent-pegs? Weseloff, or at any rate Bergmann, has not recorded this. In fact, the inference from Bergmann is that Weseloff did not "record" at all, but recounted his story by word of mouth.

**38** 30. *Seventy thousand.* For the numbers involved in the revolt, see the note on **65** 21.

**38** 33. *In reversion?*

**39** 1. *Large masses, powerful division.* Compare Appendix C, p. 93.

**39** 13. *Ouchim.* This defile is not easily located. It is not in the gazetteers, nor on such maps as were accessible to the editor.

**39** 14. *The hills of Mougaldchares* (Mugodschar or Muchajar Mountains) are a lower continuation of the Ural range, and extend from the latter southwest toward the Aral Sea.

**40** 4. *Polish dragoons.* The adjective refers not to the nationality, but to the equipment of the cavalry. Thus there was at one time in the French army a corps called *Chasseurs d'Afrique*, and in both the French army and that of the Northern troops in our own Civil War a corps of Zouaves. Similarly, at **55** 12, De Quincey speaks of *yagers* among the Chinese troops. Perhaps both Polish dragoon and yager were well-known military terms in 1837. At any rate there is no gain in scrutinizing them too closely, since the context in both cases seems to be pure invention.

¶ 28. **40** 14. *Irgitch* (Irghiz, Irgheez, Irgiz). The name is common to several rivers. The one meant is apparently the Irgiz-Koom, which rises on the eastern side of the Muchajar Mountains (**39** 14) and flows southeast into Lake Chalkar (Tschalkar Tengis), a large body of water northeast of the Aral Sea.

**40** 15. *Torgau* and *Torgai* are the spellings used by De Quincey, commonly the former. *Turgai* is the accepted form. The name applies: (1) to a district; (2) to the chief town of that district (as apparently at **5** 20); (3) to a river, the Kara-Turgai (as here and at **36** 8), which flows, with many windings (N.W., W., S.W.), in a general westerly direction, and eventually makes connection, through a chain of lakes, with the Irgiz-Koom. The town Turgai, which gives the best clue, and stands about midway of the river's course, is about 49° N., 63° E., and almost due north of Lake Chalkar.

**40** 18. *Large Russian army.* *Cf.* **39** 1 and Appendix C, p. 93.

¶ 29. **41** 15. *Concurrently,* force of the etymology ?

**41** 19. *Artillery.* It does not appear that the artillery existed, except in De Quincey's imagination.

**41** 27. *Sad solitudes of the steppes.* The repetition of the initial consonant is called alliteration.

**41** 31. *Aggravations,* etymology ?

**42** 13. *A circle,* etc. This striking picture is one of the amplifications of De Quincey's fancy.

¶ 30. **43** 2. See note on **65** 21.

**43** 5. *Only the camels.* The statement is Bergmann's ; the fine image that follows, De Quincey's. *Adust,* etymology ?

**43** 15. *The tears of Xerxes.* For the great event referred to consult a history of Greece, or Fisher, p. 95; Ploetz, p. 58. The striking incident of the tears is recorded in the seventh book of Herodotus, section 45. The fullest account in English of the expedition of Xerxes is in Grote's *History of Greece,* chapter xxxviii.

**43** 21. *Formally debated,* like *minutes of council* (**19** 15), sounds somewhat too formal as applied to the Kalmucks.

**43** 25. *Scape-goat,* etymology ? See the sixteenth chapter of *Leviticus.*

**44** 14. *Presumption ?*

**44** 20. *Return to their old allegiance—1616.* This is the date set by Bergmann (i., 144) for the swearing of allegiance to Russia. The revolt from China he puts "at the beginning of the sixteenth century." Howorth (vol. i., p. 561) supports De Quincey's date, and thus removes the objection of Professor Masson (appendix to volume vii. of his collective edition).

**44** 24. *Land of Promise—house of bondage.* What is the allusion in these scriptural phrases ? Compare *Deuteronomy* viii. 14 and ix. 28; *Exodus* xx. 2.

¶ 31. **44** 34. *Orsk* is on the River Or (from which it takes its

name), near where it joins the Ural, and at the southern end of the Ural chain proper.

**45** 1. *Oriembourg* (Orenburg), not the large town of that name (52° N., 55° E.), which is west of Orsk, but a fort (50° N., 64° E.) on the Turgai.

**45** 15. *Sinister*, etymology ?

¶ 32. See Appendix C.

**45** 20. *Upon this fact transpiring.* Is this grammatically correct ?

¶ 34. **48** 5. *Hetman* (or ataman), a Cossack name for a leader or chief.

¶ 35. **51** 5. *Desultors.* See *desultor* in a Latin dictionary, and also in a dictionary of classical antiquities.

**51** 29. *Doating*, now commonly spelled *doting.*

¶ 37. **52** 15. "*More fell,*" etc. Othello, act v., scene 2 (near the end of the play).

**52** 28. *A crowded population*, possible, perhaps, but certainly not probable. Consult a map.

**53** 4. "*Fierce varieties,*" a reminiscence perhaps of *Paradise Lost*, book ii., line 599, perhaps of vii., 272.

**53** 6. *Post equitem*, etc., a famous line from Horace, in the first ode of book iii., line 40.

**53** 7. *The undying worm*, an allusion to *Isaiah* lxvi. 24. Compare also *S. Mark* ix. 48.

**53** 16. "*From morn to dewy eve.*" This familiar quotation is from *Paradise Lost*, book i., line 742.

¶ 38. **54** 28. *A gorgeous hunting lodge.* Since the whole scene is imaginary, it is, perhaps, hardly worth while to inquire into the location of this lodge. But from the reference at **64** 17 it is to be inferred that De Quincey meant the summer palace at Ge Ho (or Zhe Hol), which is specified by Father Amiot as the place of the audience to the Kalmuck chiefs. This seems the more probable from the fact that Ge Ho is described (vol. ii., p. 206), in the account of the Earl of Macartney's embassy (see Appendix A, *Staunton*), with plates (8 and 9) showing the location beyond the Great Wall and the route thither from Pekin. But Ge Ho, instead of being a lodge in the forest, is a town with a palace and a large temple.

**54** 35. *He had arrived.* The Emperor's presence is an unwarranted and improbable assumption.

**55** 12. *Yagers*, from the German *jäger*, a huntsman ; apparently a military term of De Quincey's time for troops of a certain equip-

ment. Compare the French *chasseur* in a similar sense, and the note on **40** 4.

**56** 10. "*Indorsed*," *Paradise Regained*, book iii., line 329. Etymology ?

**56** 16. *Pageant ?*

¶ 39. **56** 32. *Had sent forward couriers*, probably only an expansion of "Je l'avais prévu" (**62** 10).

**56** 32. *All the requisite statements and petitions* is absurdly legal. Compare *documents—minutes of council* (**19** 14), and note throughout the absence of all attempt to realize the character and habits of the Kalmuck nomads.

**57** 16. *Clangour of weapons.* The noun *clangor* is used by the Latin poets, especially Vergil, of the sound of wind instruments or the cry of birds. De Quincey probably had in mind the more common words *clang* and *clank*. Consult one of the larger dictionaries.

¶ 40. **58** 6. *A large fresh-water lake.* See the note on **58** 20. Unfortunately this lake is salt ! Does De Quincey seem to have any appreciation of its size ? From this point on test the indications of geography, especially of the relative positions of the actors, to see if these indications are consistent with one another and with the actual geography.

**58** 7. *The imperial cavalry.* The interposition of the Chinese troops, both in the idea and in all the details (*e.g.*, the fort), is apparently pure invention.

¶ 41. **58** 20. *The lake of Tengis* (Tenghiz, Tengheez, Dengis). Several lakes in the Kirghiz steppes have Tengis (*i.e.*, "sea") affixed to their specific names (*e.g.*, Tschalkar Tengis). It is clear from the mention of the river Ily, and from Bergmann's specific indication (see Appendix C), that the lake meant is *Balkash* (45°–47° N., 73°–80° E.). It receives the Ily and several smaller streams, and, like other lakes of the Kirghiz steppes, is *salt* and has no outlet. Its length (N.E.–S.W.) is 345 miles, its greatest breadth 55 miles. To the west and north lie deserts. After the Caspian and the Aral, it is the largest body of water in the steppes.

**58** 20. *The desert of Kobi* (Cobi, Gobi, or Shamo) is a wide region to the west of Lake Balkash (40°–50° N., 90°–120° E.), comprising a large part of what are now known as Mongolia and Chinese Turkestan. Its length (E.–W.) is about 1,200 miles, its breadth (N.–S.) 500–700 miles. Its central portion is shifting sand. In the northern and the southern parts are broad rocky tracts, with some oases.

In the atlases of Andrée and Stieler the eastern portion is marked significantly "Hunger-Steppe."

**58** 32. *600,000–260,000.* See the note on **65** 21.

**60** 26. *To allow of men raising their heads* is ungrammatical.

**60** 31. *The eastern side.* See the note on **58** 6.

**61** 8. "*Globes*" *and* "*turms.*" These barbarisms are meant to recall the Latin military terms *globi* and *turmæ*. De Quincey may be thinking of Milton, who uses *turms* in *Paradise Regained*, book iv., line 66; and *globe* in *Paradise Lost*, ii., 512, though without so far forcing the meaning of the latter.

¶ 42. **62** 4. *The River Ily* (Ili or Eelee) rises in the mountains of Thian-Shan (about 42° N., 81° E.), and flows N.E., then N.N.W., into Lake Balkash. Its course is about 300 miles.

**62** 6. *The beneficent attention of the Chinese Emperor* seems indeed surprising. Why should he have assumed these "parental cares"? In spite of the "smooth and specious language" in which, as Gibbon says, his inscription is couched, there is more than one hint that he could not help it. The coming of the Torgut Kalmucks was practically an invasion of his borders. Father Amiot remarks in a note: "Here the Emperor dare not speak out. I will speak for him. He feared with reason that the Torgotes would take by main force the region which they regarded as their ancient fatherland. With the few troops then at or near the Ily, how could the unexpected irruption have been prevented? Large armies would have been needed to drive the Torgotes back. By receiving their homage and establishing them himself the Emperor avoided the whole difficulty. War, if it had been resorted to, must have been most bloody, because it could have been brought to a close only by the total extinction of that branch of the Eleutes. Did he not follow the wiser policy in taking glory for an event which the Chinese historians would not otherwise have failed to set down among the most ominous of his reign?"[1]

Farther on he adds: "It must be admitted that the Emperor conducted himself on this occasion with all the wisdom and generosity of the greatest prince of the universe. It must also be admitted that no one but the Emperor of China is rich enough to spend out of his own purse, without exacting anything from his subjects, sums which could not but be regarded as exaggerated if they were set down here in detail."[2]

**62** 8. "*La nation,*"[3] etc. For the translation see the italicized

[1] *Memoires*, etc., p. 415. [2] *Ibid.*, etc., p. 417. [3] *Ibid.*, p. 416.

passage in Appendix B, p. 90. The quotation, though substantially correct, is inexact and, in places, doubtful in syntax. See Appendix C, p. 90 and foot note.

¶ 43. **62** 33. "*Lorsqu'ils arrivérent,*" etc. The quotation is from a letter of Father Amiot appended to his translation of the Emperor's inscription. He is quoting from Yu-min-tchoung, "a grandee of the Empire." In English the passage runs: "When they reached our frontier, several hundred thousand in number (extreme fatigue, hunger, thirst, and all the other difficulties of a very long and toilsome route had killed almost as many again), they were reduced to the extremity of misery. They were in need of everything. He (*i.e.*, the Emperor, Kien Long) had such places prepared for them to settle in as were suited to their way of life. He had food and clothing distributed. He presented them with oxen, sheep, tools, to put them in the way of grazing and agriculture—and all this at his own expense, which amounted to immense sums, without counting the money given to the head of each family, to provide for the sustenance of his wife and children."[1] The quotation, like the previous one, is inexact.

¶ 44. **63** 20. *Pastoral, vagrant, nomadic,* distinction ? etymology ?

¶ 45. **65** 4. "*Lex nec justior,*" etc., "No law is more just than that the devisers of murder should perish by their own device." Ovid, *Ars Amatoria,* i., 655, 656. But the quotation should be: "*Justus uterque fuit; neque enim lex æquior ulla est Quam,*" etc.

**65** 12. *Lares.* Consult a dictionary of classical antiquities.

**65** 16. *Arcadian beauty.* Arcadian simplicity is the common proverb. Both expressions arise from the fact that Arcadia, preeminently among the Greek states, was a pastoral country. Compare the oft-quoted *Arcades ambo* in the seventh Eclogue of Vergil, line 4.

**65** 21. *Agony—half a million.* "Although the sufferings of the Torguts on their march must have been excessive, there is clearly great exaggeration in the account of Bergmann. We must remember that they were nomads by origin, and that long marches were familiar to them, as were also the various incidents that accompany a caravan journey over such a country as the Kirghiz steppes; and although they arrived poor, and denuded of almost everything, it is not probable that they lost a very large portion of their numbers on the way, as Bergmann would have us believe. There is considerable discrepancy between the Russian numbers and those supplied by the

[1] *Memoires,* etc., p. 422.

Chinese. The former make out that only 40,000 families left Russia, while the latter claim that 50,000 families, numbering 300,000 mouths, arrived in China. This kind of discrepancy shows that the loss of life on the journey could not have been so great as Bergmann supposes."[1] Bergmann records (i., 219, 220) an enumeration at the Jaik which reported over 70,000 tents, and he thinks the number that left Russia must have been 70,000–75,000 tents. As to the number that arrived in China, he does not venture on so close an estimate, but thinks 50,000 families an exaggeration.

**65** 23. *At Athens.* See **31** 20 and note.

**66** 14. *Mighty columns of granite and brass*, a fancy of De Quincey's. The letter of Father Amiot, from which quotation was made in the note on **62** 33, contains the following passage, also from Yu-min-tchoung : "The year of the arrival of the Torgotes happened to be precisely that in which the Emperor was celebrating the eightieth birthday of his mother the Empress-dowager. In memory of this happy occasion His Majesty had caused to be built upon The-mountain-that-shades-from-the-heat a vast and magnificent Miao (temple) to the honour of all the attributes of Fo united in one worship. It had just been completed when Oubacha and the other princes of his nation arrived at Géhol (Ge Ho). In memory of an event which contributed to make this forever a red-letter year, His Majesty wished to erect in the same Miao a monument which should fix the epoch of the event and witness to its authenticity. He himself composed the words and wrote them out with his own hand."[2] Yu-min-tchoung goes on to say that he was permitted to make a copy. This copy it is which Father Amiot translated (see Appendix B). De Quincey's inscription (**66** 20–**67** 14) is therefore an invention of his own—a venial offence, but for the deliberate imposture of the foot-note.

**66.** Note. *Byzantine Cæsars.* See Fisher, part ii., chapter 3 (p. 217); Ploetz, p. 210.

[1] Howorth, vol. i., p. 579.

[2] *Memoires, etc.*, pp. 425, 426.

# APPENDIX A

## BOOKS BEARING UPON THE KALMUCKS AND THEIR REVOLT.[1]

*Amiot, le Père:* Monument de la Transmigration des Tourgouths des Bords de la Mer Caspienne dans l'Empire de la Chine (Mémoires concernant l'Histoire, etc., des Chinois, par les Missionaires de Pékin, Paris, 1776, vol. i., pp. 400–427.)

*Bergmann, Benjamin B.:* Nomadische Streifereien unter den Kalmüken in den Jahren 1802 und 1803; Riga, 1804 (vol. i., pp. 139–246, Versuch zur Geschichte der Kalmükenflucht von der Wolga). See also *Moris.*

*Castera, Jean Henri:* Life of Catherine II., translated by the Rev. W. W. Dakins, London, 1799 (vol. ii., p. 160).

*Chopin, Jean Marie:* Russie (in a series entitled l'Univers); Paris, 1838 (vol. i., vol. vii. of the series, p. 338).

*L'Evesque, Pierre Charles:* Histoire de Russie, nouvelle (4me) édition; Hambourg et Brunswick, 1800 (vol. vii., pp. 1–177; viii., p. 276).

*De Hell, M. et Mme. Xavier Hommaire:* Les Steppes de la Mer Caspienne, etc.; translated as "Travels in the Steppes of the Caspian Sea," etc., London, 1847 (pp. 221–263).

*Howorth, Henry R., F. S. A.:* History of the Mongols from the 9th to the 19th Century; London, 1876 (part i., the Mongols Proper and the Kalmucks; pp. 534–589, the Keraits and Torguts).

*Huc, le Père, Prêtre Missionaire de la Congrégation de Saint-Lazare:* Souvenirs d'un Voyage dans la Tartarie, le Thibet, et la Chine, pendant les années 1844, 1845, and 1846; translated by Mrs. Percy Sinnett, London; translation reprinted, New York, 1852.

*Macartney*, the Earl of; see *Staunton.*

*De Mailla, le Père Joseph-Anne-Marie de Moyriac, Jésuite François, Missionaire à Pékin:* Histoire Générale de la Chine, etc.; Paris, 1780 (vol. xi., pp. 582–587).

[1] A complete bibliography from the Chinese side will be found in the *Bibliotheca Sinica* of Cordier (Paris, 1880–1895).

*Mémoires* concernant les Chinois, etc.; see *Amiot*.

*Milner, the Rev. Thomas, M.A., F. R. G. S.:* Russia; its Rise and Progress, Tragedies and Revolutions; London, 1856 (pp. 355–376).

*Moris, M.:* Essai sur la fuite des Kalmuks des bords du Volga, traduit de l'Allemand (Bergmann): Chatillon-sur Seine, 1825.

*Pallas, Petr. Simon:* Sammlungen Historischer Nachrichten über die Mongolischen Volkerschaften, 2 vols.; St. Petersburg, 1776 (vol. i., pp. 60–93). Less important is Pallas's Travels through the Southern Provinces of the Russian Empire in 1793–94; translated from the German, 2d ed., London, 1812.

*Rambaud, Alfred:* Histoire de la Russie; Paris, 1878; translated by Leonora B. Lang as "The History of Russia from the Earliest Times to 1877;" London, 1879 (vol. i., p. 31; ii., pp. 133, 134).

*Staunton, Sir George, Bart.:* An Authentic Account of an Embassy from the King of Great Britain to the Emperor of China, etc., taken chiefly from the papers of His Excellency the Earl of Macartney, etc.; London, 1798, 2 vols., maps and plates in a 3d vol. (Vol. ii., p. 265, contains a very inaccurate reference to the migration of the Kalmucks. The general map at the beginning of vol. i. shows "Lake Tengis," with the river Ily and the settlement of the "Torgote Tartars," all rather inaccurate. This map and the plates, to which reference is made in the notes, were not improbably consulted by De Quincey. He certainly knew the book.)

*Tooke, William, F. R. S.:* The Life of Catherine II., 4th ed., London, 1800; vol. ii., pp. 158–168; also View of the Russiam Empire during the Reign of Catherine the Second, and to the Close of the 18th Century; 2d ed., London, 1800 (vol. i., pp. 432–434).

## APPENDIX B

### SELECTIONS[1] FROM THE INSCRIPTION OF THE EMPEROR KIEN LONG, TRANSLATED INTO FRENCH BY FATHER AMIOT.[2]

[The earlier narratives cited in Appendix A are all based on Amiot, except Pallas, who adds little, and Bergmann, who recon-

[1] Taken from the English Version of de Hell's narrative, pages 227–235.

[2] See Appendix A for the full title.

structs the whole story, mainly from the Russian side and from oral testimony.]

"In the thirty-sixth year of Kien Long, that is to say, in the year of Jesus Christ, 1771, all the Tartars composing the nation of the Torgouths [1] arrived, after encountering a thousand perils, in the plains watered by the Ily, entreating the favour to be admitted among the vassals of the great Chinese empire. By their own account, they have abandoned for ever, and without regret, the sterile banks of the Volga and the Jaïk, along which the Russians had formerly allowed them to settle, near where the two rivers empty themselves into the Caspian. They have abandoned them, they say, *to come and admire more closely the brilliant lustre of the heavens, and at last to enjoy, like so many others, the happiness of having henceforth for master the greatest prince in the world.* Notwithstanding the many battles in which they have been obliged to engage, defensively or offensively, with those through whose country they had to pass, and at whose expense they were necessarily compelled to live; notwithstanding the depredations committed on them by the vagrant Tartars, who repeatedly attacked and plundered them on their march; notwithstanding the enormous fatigues endured by them in traversing more than 10,000 leagues,[2] through one of the most difficult countries; notwithstanding hunger, thirst, misery, and an almost general scarcity of common necessaries, to which they were exposed during their eight months journey, their numbers still amounted to 50,000 families when they arrived; and these 50,000 families, to use the language of the country, counted 300,000 mouths, without sensible error. . . .

"'All [3] those who now compose the nation of the Torgouths, undismayed by the dangers of a long and toilsome journey, filled with the sole desire of procuring for the future a better manner of life and a happier lot, have abandoned the places where they dwelt far beyond our frontier, have traversed with unshakable courage a space of more than ten thousand leagues, and have ranged themselves, of their own accord, among the number of my subjects. Their submission to me is not a submission inspired by fear, but a voluntary and free submission, if ever such there was. . . .

[1] De Mailla (*Histoire Générale de la Chine*, vol. xi., p. 586, foot-note) quotes from Abulgasi-Bayadur-Chan a classification of the Kalmucks into *Kallmacki-Dsongari* (Soongares), *Kallmacki-Coschoti* (Khoshotes), and *Kallmacki-Torgauti* (Torgotes or Torgouths). This classification, though often modified, has never been superseded.

[2] "Dix mille lys." So elsewhere.

[3] Here begins the translation proper. What precedes is Father Amiot's preface.

"'Oubacha, who is now khan of the Torgouths, is great grandson of Aiouki. The Russians, never ceasing to require soldiers of him to be incorporated in their troops, having at last taken his own son from him as a hostage, and being besides of a different religion from himself, and making no account of that of the Lamas which the Torgouths profess, Oubacha and his people finally determined to shake off a yoke which was daily becoming more and more insupportable.

"'After having secretly deliberated among themselves, they resolved to quit an abode where they had to suffer so much, and come and dwell in the countries subject to China, where the religion of Fo is professed.

"'In the beginning of the eleventh moon of last year they began their march with their women and children and all their baggage, traversed the country of the Hasacks, passed along the shores of Lake Palkaché Nor and through the adjoining deserts, and towards the close of the sixth moon of this year, after having completed more than 10,000 leagues in the eight months of their wayfaring, they at last arrived on the frontiers of Chara Pen, not far from the banks of the Ily. I was already aware that the Torgouths were on their march to submit themselves to me, the news having been brought me shortly after their departure from Etchil. I then reflected that Ileton, general of the troops at Ily, having already been charged with other very important affairs, it was to be feared that he could not regulate those of the new comers with all the requisite attention.

"'Chouhédé, one of the general's councillors, was at Ouché, employed in maintaining order among the Mahometans. As he was at hand to attend to the Torgouths, I ordered him to repair to Ily, that he might use his best efforts to establish them solidly. . . .

"'Nevertheless, I neglected none of the precautions that seemed to me necessary. I ordered Chouhédé to erect forts and redoubts in the most important places, and have all the passes strictly guarded. I enjoined him to exert himself personally in procuring necessary provisions of all kinds within the frontiers, whilst fit persons, carefully chosen by him, should make every arrangement for securing quiet without.

"'The Torgouths arrived, and at once found lodging, food, and all the conveniences they could have enjoyed each in his own dwelling. Nor was this all; the principal men among them, who were to come in person and pay homage to me, were conducted with honor and free of expense by the imperial post-roads to the place where I then was. I saw them, spoke to them, and was pleased that they should

enjoy the pleasures of the chase with me; and after the days allotted to that recreation were ended, they repaired in my suite to Ge Ho. There I gave them the banquet of ceremony, and made them the ordinary presents with the same pomp and state as I am accustomed to employ when I give solemn audience to Tchering and the chiefs of the Tourbeths, of whom he is the leader. . . .

"'*The nation of the Torgouths arrived at Ily in total destitution, without victuals or clothing. I had foreseen this, and given orders to Chouhédé and others to lay up the necessary provisions of all kinds that they might be promptly succoured. This was done. The lands were divided, and to each family was assigned a sufficient portion for its support by tillage or cattle rearing. Each individual received cloth for garments, a year's supply of corn, household utensils, and other necessaries, and besides all this, several ounces of silver to provide himself with whatever might have been forgotten. Specific tracts, fertile in pasturage, were appointed for them, and they were given oxen, sheep, etc., that they might afterwards labour for their own sustenance and welfare.*'"

## APPENDIX C

### RELATIONS OF DE QUINCEY'S NARRATIVE TO BERGMANN'S.[1]

Bergmann is the only authority De Quincey can be affirmed to have read. Father Amiot he quotes, but only what appears in Bergmann's foot-notes.[2] If De Quincey had understood that Father Amiot's account does not mention a monument and an inscription, but is the translation of that inscription, he would hardly have dared to invent the "mighty columns of granite and brass," and the rhetorical inscription with its appended note (p. 66). This informa-

[1] For the full title see Appendix A.

[2] Bergmann quotes Amiot in German translation, but Professor Masson (vol. vii., p. 9, of his collective edition) asserts that De Quincey used a French translation of Bergmann, which would, of course, quote directly from Amiot. This extremely indirect research may account for some trifling inaccuracies in De Quincey's quotations. The French translation of Bergmann, which I have been unable to procure, appears in the British Museum Catalogue (1048, c. 27), as follows:—*Bergmann, B. F. B: Voyage chez les Kalmuks, Traduit de l'Allemand par M. Moris (Essai sur la fuite des Kalmuks des bords du Volga)*; Chatillon-sur-Seine, 1825, 8°.

tion he would have found in the very title. Moreover, he does not mention Father Amiot, referring simply, as Bergmann does, to "Jesuit missionaries." [1]

But even Bergmann De Quincey can be said to follow only in the use of certain details not given by other historians, in a few slight correspondences of phrase, and in the interpretation of the revolt as a colossal scheme of Zebek Dorchi's. His variations from Bergmann are twofold: first, the essence of his treatment is an imaginative expansion and realization of the scenes of the flight, leading up to a climax of horror and misery; secondly, he indulges, perhaps unconsciously, in a cavalier handling of Bergmann's facts. The following analysis proceeds by paragraphs, with references to page and line.

¶ ¶ 1–3 are, of course, entirely De Quincey.

¶ 4. The characterization of Oubacha and of Zebek Dorchi follows Bergmann (i., 146) closely. Most of the other authorities make Oubacha an old man, and do not mention Zebek Dorchi.

¶ 5 follows Bergmann (i., 151) essentially, but varies widely in details. Bergmann's account of the reorganization of the Sarga is as follows (i., 153):

"Prince and Sargatchi were to be thenceforth subject to the control of an imperial council. The prince could merely lodge complaint in case any Sargatchi broke his oath of allegiance. Complaint and defense would then be duly investigated and decided as in the ordinary course of law. If found guilty, the Sargatchi would be removed from office; if found innocent, he would be publicly acquitted. Moreover, by a salary of one hundred rubles, the Sargatchi, it was believed, would be still further attached to the Russian interest. If this reorganization did not meet all expectations, the Russian court thought at least to secure itself against any ambitious designs of Oubacha by appointing Zebek Dorchi his first Sargatchi. Instead of drawing the sting of the serpent, they gave it still greater opportunity and means to distill a more effectual venom for the future.

"Although Zebek Dorchi found himself deceived in his expectations, yet his new position gave him a sphere of influence which opened other prospects for him in the future."

¶ 6. *Welcomed as a benefactor* (**10** 13), Bergmann, i., 156.

*For those very acts of interference* (**10** 30), Bergmann i., 160.

[1] Bergmann happens to cite always the whole series in which Father Amiot's report appears, instead of the report itself.

*Worm-behemoth* (**11** 9). Bergmann's figure (i., 154) is giant and dwarf.

¶ 7. The characterizations of Erempel and of the lama follow Bergmann (i., 156–159); so also the *oracle* (i., 164) and *the years of the tiger and the hare* (i., 165).

¶¶ 8–9. Bergmann (i., 167). De Quincey omits the episode of Oubacha's allowing forty-three of the hostile chiefs to escape, but otherwise follows closely.

¶ 10 has no basis in Bergmann, except a few words (i., 168) suggesting that the Empress may have been suspicious.

¶ 11 is practically all De Quincey; but **19** 21– **20** 10 has for basis Bergmann's remark (i., 170) that Zebek Dorchi had the prince sworn with a solemn oath.

¶¶ 12–14. Bergmann (i., 181–183) says the chiefs were assembled in the Nryn steppe on pretense of an attack of Kirghises, and that Zebek Dorchi made a speech. "If this unexpected speech made its impression upon the Kalmuck nobles—much greater must have been the impression when, by way of confirmation, there was passed around among those present a document gotten up for this purpose in which Zebek Dorchi was specified as the conductor of those 300 sons of Saissangs" (whom the Russians, according to Zebek, were about to take as hostages). Some of the reasons alleged in ¶ 12 appear in Bergmann (i., 161) as used to convince Oubacha.

¶¶ 15–16. The agency of Kichinskoi and Beketoff is the same as in Bergmann (i., 168–170, 179). But Bergmann mentions no feud between the two. He says that Beketoff had private information from one of the Sargatchi, and that Kichinskoi was blind enough to give the Khan a detachment of twenty Cossacks, with two field-pieces, for the pretended war with the Kirghises.

¶ 17 is entirely De Quincey, and contains (**27** 23– **28** 4) an absurd misunderstanding. The Kalmucks had no occasion to burn their villages. They simply discarded such of their tents and tent-fittings as were not absolutely necessary, and packed the rest on their camels. Especially absurd is *the timbers of his own palace* (**27** 31), of which the basis is the following sentence in Bergmann (i., 192):

"The prince himself set the people an example by having his largest tents (Wohnhütten) destroyed, and the long tent-poles (Dachhölzer) made into lances."

¶¶ 18, 19. Bergmann (i., 184–189) says that the Western Kalmucks were kept back by the open river; that this circumstance saved the Russian towns and villages, except that some Armenian and

Tartar merchants were plundered: and that the twenty Cossacks detailed by Kichinskoi for the supposed war with the Kirghises were maltreated and carried off.

¶¶ 20–22 are entirely De Quincey.

¶ 23 shows considerable variation. As to the "fortress" Koulagina (**34** 1–17) Bergmann says (i., 193):

"The Jaik Cossacks had not counted on a visit from the Kalmucks; for the greater part of them were at the Caspian fisheries, their only occupation since they renounced piracy. The few hundreds who had been left in the forts owed their salvation quite as much to Kalmuck inexperience in the art of siege and their inefficient equipment as to the haste with which they had to cross the Jaik in order to escape the Russian troops. Oubacha himself summoned the fort Kulagina, and, on the refusal of the commandant, planted the two field-pieces that he had gotten from Kichinskoi. This fort, like the others along the Jaik, was only a stockade; but the fire of the garrison cost the Kalmucks several men, while they themselves plied their cannon without effect."

All the rest of the paragraph, where it is not invention, is misunderstanding. Compare this account, and De Quincey's note to page 40, with the following (Bergmann, i., 194):

"Just beyond the Jaik the Cossacks of the neighbourhood drew together under Mitraessow, and, about 2,000 strong, rode after the fugitives. Among the mountains they intercepted a small horde (*Kleinen Haufen*), which, on account of its desperate resistance, they cut down almost to a man. The oulosses Jikae Zechorr and Aerkaetunn, which together numbered several thousand tents, surrendered without a blow. The chieftains of the former, Assarcho and Maschi, had given to the governor of Astrakhan repeated assurances of their inclination to remain in Russia. No sooner did they see the Cossacks approaching than they went over to them with their hordes." Bergmann goes on to say that these *oulosses* were reinstated in their former abodes, but their twenty chiefs (*Saissangs*) were knouted for killing thirty captured Russians. The only trace of De Quincey's bloody battle is in the second sentence, which does not refer to these *oulosses* at all.

¶¶ 24–27 have no basis in Bergmann for the essential facts, and hardly any for the details of the suffering.

¶¶ 28–31 agree substantially with Bergmann's facts, but neither with his order nor with his details. According to Bergmann, Traubenberg was sent from the town of Orenburg with 5,000 regulars,

mainly Cossacks (*large Russian army*, etc., **40** 18). He was reinforced by strong bands of Bashkirs and Kirghises (i., 196). The Kalmuck discontent and desire for return (i., 198) broke out at the Irgitch into loud demands (i., 202). They crossed the river on bundles of rushes (i., 203). Traubenberg was guilty of neglect in not pushing the pursuit (i., 205). Nurali Khan broke away to pursue the Kalmucks (i., 217).

¶¶ 32, 36–42. The persecutions of the Bashkirs and Kirghises, in almost daily attacks, and the final carnage at Lake Balkash grew from two or three pages of Bergmann. He says (i., 217) that Nurali Khan and Ablai Khan fell upon the Kalmucks in the midst of a desert (the Kalmucks had already gone on from the Turgai) and tried to cut them off from the next oases. Despair gave strength to the Kalmucks; greed of plunder to their enemies. As victory was inclining to the former, Zebek Dorchi and Bambar were cut off and would surely have been carried prisoners but for Chereng. The fight lasted two days, and the field was covered with corpses. The narrative then goes on (i., 218):

"The Kirghises, whom the success of this battle (the first recorded by Bergmann) encouraged to further attacks, ceased not to disturb the fleeing Kalmucks up to the borders of China. After many days of forced marching through almost waterless regions the fugitives reached Lake Tengis (Balgaschnur, as the Mongols call it). Toward this lake they rushed *en masse*, fighting for place with their own cattle, and pressed in, without throwing off their clothes, as far as the depth allowed, at last to slake their torturing thirst. Many fell victims to their incontinence, more to the sword of the Kirghises in a bloody battle. Since there was no chance for defence, only the swiftest Kalmucks were able to reach the farther bank of the Ily and escape. The Kirghises returned to their homes laden with booty and accompanied by numerous prisoners. The Kalmucks had still to cut their way through the plundering Buræts before they attained the dearly-bought goal of their seven months' migration."

The Chinese Emperor's view of the approaching combatants, and the interposition of his troops, is without foundation and highly improbable, if not impossible.

¶¶ 34, 35. Weseloff is one of Bergmann's most important authorities. On his oral evidence rest many incidents peculiar to Bergmann's narrative. As if in recognition of this, Bergmann appends the story of Weseloff's captivity and escape (pp. 232–246). In summary it is as follows :

Throughout the earlier part of the flight Weseloff's hardships amounted often to torture. But at the Jemba his chains were removed, and Oubacha would have given him his liberty but for the demur of the chiefs. Hearing that a Kalmuck had come to camp with a letter from the Russian General Traubenberg, Weseloff set out to find him. On the way he was hailed by another Kalmuck named Lanssan, who proposed to flee with him. Lanssan's family sped the two with presents of copper money and a flint-lock musket. The fugitives stole six horses (De Quincey makes them catch wild horses) to relieve their own, and by means of the eight reached the Turgai (200 versts) the next day. Swimming their horses over, they then returned for their clothes, but were so exhausted with fatigue and exposure that they sank down on the eastern bank and slept till next midday. On the eleventh day they reached Orsk. They had been obliged to kill one of their horses for food. With the money from the sale of the other seven Weseloff pushed on, stopping at Orenburg, and again, with a relative, at the foot of the Ural Mountains. Meantime he had sent word ahead to his mother, but her joy at the meeting was so great that she died within three months.

There is no hint, it will be observed, of the saving of Oubacha's life, nor any mention of skeletons; but "vast heaps of money" (**51** 18), or rather large heaps of copper coin, are mentioned by both Bergmann and Pallas. De Quincey's statement—"He was, however, a man of principle, and always adhered firmly to the details of his printed report" (**51** 12), is a typical instance of his accurate inaccuracy. Bergmann, in his preface (i., 24), says:

"For almost six months I have been with him [*i.e.*, Weseloff] almost daily, at almost every meeting have learned something new about the flight of the Kalmucks, and have made him relate much of it two or three times, in order to assure myself of the truth of his representations. I found his expressions so consistent that I cannot doubt their truth."

But in a note to p. 141, Bergmann cites "the only *printed* records, so far as I know," and Weseloff's is not among them. In fact, Bergmann makes a point of the valuable *oral* evidence on which his account is based, and especially of Weseloff's.

¶¶ 43–46 contain nothing from Bergmann except the hint for the "assassination" (**65** 1) of the ambitious chiefs (i., 224).

These variations in fact may be explained by three hypotheses: (1) De Quincey mistranslated; (2) he had other sources, as yet undis-

covered; (3) he invented. Of these three, the first is insufficient and improbable; the second, at least improbable; the third, toward which Professor Masson inclines (collective edition, vol. vii., p. 426), has some support in the fact that De Quincey often wrote without means of verifying references. That this was the case here we have his own statement in the preface to the fourth volume of Hogg's collective edition, in which the piece was reprinted:

"The series of papers, published in this and the preceding volume, were originally written under one set of disadvantages, and are now revised under another. They were written generally under great pressure as to time, in order to catch the critical periods of monthly journals; written oftentimes at a distance from the press (so as to have no opportunity for correction); and always written at a distance from libraries—so that very many statements, references, and citations were made on the authority of my unassisted memory. Under such circumstances were most of the papers composed; and they are now reissued in a corrected form, sometimes even partially recast,[1] under the distraction of a nervous misery which embarrasses my efforts in a mode and in a degree inexpressible by words."

The variations in form are all of the general character noted at p. xxxii. as typical of De Quincey's method.

[1] The changes in this particular piece are merely verbal.—Ed.

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